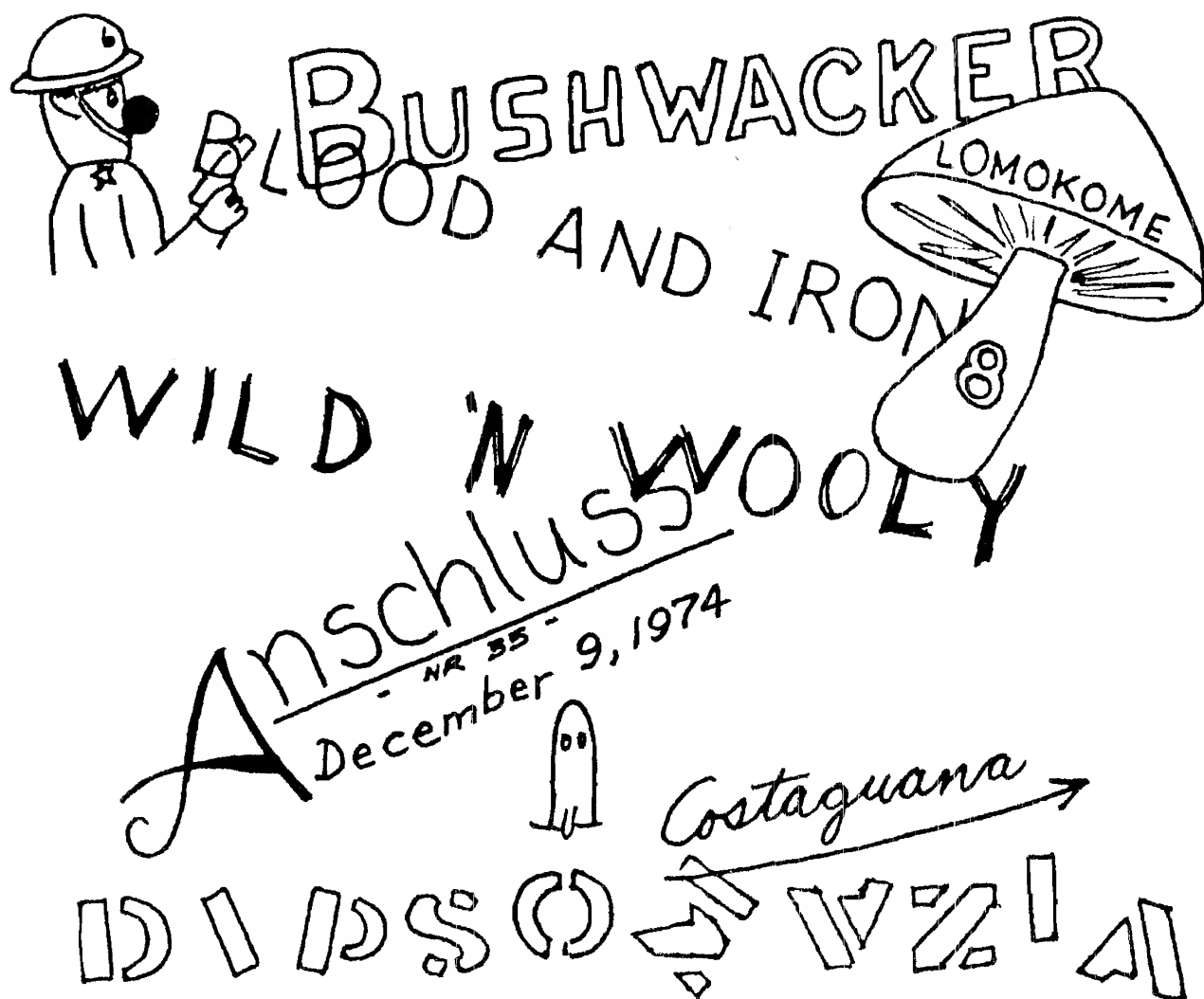


DIPLOMACY WORLD



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DIPLOMACY WORLD

DIPLOMACY WORLD is a quarterly magazine devoting itself to the game of Diplomacy*. Subscription rate is \$5.00 per year (four issues) in the U.S.A., \$6.00 elsewhere. DIPLOMACY WORLD may be sent by First Class Mail for an additional \$3.00. Please address all subscription orders and renewals to Jerry H. Jones, 1854 Wagner Street, Pasadena, CA 91107. Please make all checks payable to DIPLOMACY WORLD.

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Article contributions to be included in the next issue of DIPLOMACY WORLD should be mailed to Jerry Jones (address above) in time to be received by April 15th.

ABOUT THE COVER: Inside this issue of DIPLOMACY WORLD is an article by Fred Davis Jr. dealing with the history of variants, so on the cover is a small collection of some of the mastheads used by some of the earlier zines that carried variants.

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How To Write Orders

BOB SERGEANT

The fundamental thing to remember when writing your orders is that you want the GM to carry them out the way you intend for them to be made. The orders should be written so that the GM does not have to perform guess-work to decide what you intend. Let's take an example of well-written orders and see what can help the GM:

1980PQ (1) Sucker's Game (2)
France (3)
Fall 1901 (4)

A(5) Spain(6) -(7) Portugal(8)
F Mid-Atlantic Ocean - Spain(sc)(9)
A Burgundy S ENGLISH(10) A Yorkshire - Belgium(11)

Bob Sergeant(12)
December 12, 1981(13)

Press: Paris to World; Hi.(14)

(1) This is called the Boardman Number. Many GM's sort the incoming players' moves by this number. It is required by nearly all GMs and failure to use it may result in your orders being mis-filed or thrown out as not being in compliance with the HouseRules. While it may be clear to you that you are playing France in the "new game you just started", it may not be clear to the GM.

(2) This is called a House Name. GM's which use them often accept them instead of the Boardman Number, but it is never recommended to submit orders without the BN. If you wish to use the House Name,

do so, but always use it in conjunction with the Boardman Number.

(3) Always include the name of your country. While this may not seem important early, the GM does not always remember who you are, particularly if he carries a large number of games, or what country you are playing if the location of your units is not a clue.

(4) Always include the game Season and Year. It lets the GM know that he has the set of orders intended for the cur-

rent season, and not an old set.

(5) Label your units as A (army) or F (fleet). Many GMs will disallow your orders if you have not labeled your units or have labeled them incorrectly. One of the bane of a player's patience is an opponent's unit which changes from F to A and vice versa, without the GMs notice. It is useless to trap an army in Albania and find the GM has allowed a fleet Albania to retreat to the Ionian Sea.

(6) Although the GM will abbreviate when he reports your moves, in the interests of saving space it is not recommended that you do so when you are submitting orders. You do not have to save space and in the process of abbreviating most errors occur. A simple transposition of F Bla and you are trying to order F Bal. A GM would allow F Balck Sea, but not F Bal. And the ambiguity of F Nor is to be avoided. Why argue with the GM that the move can have only one meaning, when you can write what you mean to start with.

(7) Some abbreviating is permissible in the well-written order. A dash (-) stands for to, or moves to. S means supports; C means convoys.

(8) Always write the destination out fully, too.

(9) Always specify the coast when you are moving to a double-coasted province. Sometimes it is unnecessary but if you get in the habit of always specifying the coast, you will always be covered. If you are leaving a double-coasted province, be sure you list the correct coast. GMs differ considerably on how they rule when you don't list the coast or list it incorrectly, so to be covered, check your last issue of the game for the correct coast.

(10) Allan Calhamer has recently said that he did not intend that the nationality of a foreign unit need be specified for a valid order. GMs are still mixed on how they rule when the foreign nationality is not specified. To be sure your move is made as intended, specify that you are supporting or conveying an English, or Italian, or whatever, Army or Fleet. It helps the GM to adjudicate with a minimum of errors, and

an error-free game is what we all would like.

(11) Specify the location and destination of the foreign unit, just as you would your own units. Supporting the "English army to Belgium" is usually held as an invalid order. And remember, your writing a support in this manner does not bind the English army to move like that. England must also make the order, and he can make another move instead.

(12) In your orders this should be your signature. It is a GMs proof that you submitted the orders, and not someone else who happens to have a typewriter like yours.

(13) Always date your orders. That way, if you need to change your orders a GM can tell which set you want to replace which. Don't rely on postal cancellation, since it is often illegible. Don't rely on delivery date, since moves mailed days apart can arrive on the same day. And it is not the GMs job to keep track of receipt dates, it is yours to make clear which set of orders is your final set.

(14) If you write press, set it off by labeling it such. Don't make a GM guess whether your comment is press or an aside note to him, not for publication.

Also while it may be amusing to write orders like: A Burgundy sneers at the German invader, some GMs do not allow units ordered so to receive support in holding. The best way of telling how each GM rules and remembering that, is to avoid the problem.

Proper attention should also be paid to whether you have listed your units correctly. Always check with the last adjudication after you have written your orders to be sure you have your units located correctly. Also double-check with the game board to be sure your moves are possible. Some people write their moves relying on their memory as to whether moves are possible, but remember, your memory can play tricks.

With attention to the way you write your orders, hassles with the GM can be avoided, and you can concentrate your attention to the hassles with the other players.

A HOBBY GIANT RETIRES

DOUG BEYERLEIN

On 8 November 1980 postal Diplomacy game 1978U ended in ADAG and with it ended an era. The November issue of ADAG (#174) in which the game concluded, is the last issue of ADAG. Hal Naus, ADAG's publisher, editor and gamesmaster, is calling it quits after 14 years of continuous service to the postal Diplomacy world.

Many, if not most of you, have never heard of Hal Naus or seen a copy of his zine, ADAG (short for A Droit A Gauche), but in his own way he has had a major effect on the hobby since he started publishing in the summer of 1966. In his 14 years of monthly publication of ADAG he gamesmastered 44 regular games of postal Diplomacy from start to finish. In addition, he picked up 29 orphaned games and ran them to completion. This is a total of 73 regular postal Diplomacy games. Only John Boardman has published longer and gamesmastered more regular postal Diplomacy games from start to finish and no one (including Boardman) has seen as many games to completion as Hal Naus. Hal has performed a valuable service to the postal Diplomacy hobby and has been a stabilizing influence on a very volatile hobby.

I first met Hal Naus in the summer of 1967 in National City, California (a suburb of San Diego). I had known him by mail ever since I received a complimentary copy of ADAG #1 a year earlier. However, I was surprised by what I discovered. Hal was not your typical high school or college age Diplomacy player. He was (and is) a middle age, heavy set, blue collar worker of very modest means. He was not interested in making ADAG the most popular zine in the hobby or using it as a vehicle to show off his writing talent. He just wanted ADAG to be a nice friendly place to play a game of postal Diplomacy-- nothing more and nothing less.

Hal was introduced to Diplomacy and the

postal hobby in 1965 through a group of bridge playing friends. He quickly became a competent player and soon started a zine, A Droit A Gauche (French for "to the right, to the left" -- a statement of his hobby neutrality). He was part of the San Diego publishing crowd (Rod Walker, Larry Peery, and Conrad von Metzke), but while the others showed off their literary skills and delved into hobby politics, Hal gamesmastered. Hal also was most generous in picking up some games orphaned by other gamesmasters. Rarely did he ever receive any financial reward for these good deeds. In fact, he was often very lax about keeping track of subscriptions and more often than not five dollars got one a life-time sub to ADAG. For stand-by players it was even cheaper. Back in 1967 I told Hal I would play in any stand-by position he had and for years after I played free as a replacement player in ADAG. Edi Birsan did the same thing and all of this free practice paid off years later when he became the only player to ever win two DIPLOMACY WORLD demonstration games.

I saw Hal Naus again in 1971 at the San Diego DipCon and later in 1974 during another visit. He had hardly changed, although much had changed around him. He had moved to nearby Chula Vista, his wife had died, and his children were now teenagers, but Hal was still the same. He talked about games, events and people we both knew from years before. To Hal it was all as if it had been just yesterday.

I think that Hal would still be publishing today except that in 1978 he did change. He met a woman, they fell in love, and were later married. Hal decided to end his postal Diplomacy career that was to span three decades. He started no more new games, but gamesmastered his

(Continued on page 30)

More

Computerized Diplomacy

DAVID DYER

I'll begin with an unequivocal assertion. A computer program to actually play Diplomacy is a very difficult task; an adequate program is far beyond the current state of the art. However, the art won't be advanced by mere nay-saying.

For the convenience of this discussion, I'll divide the process of playing Diplomacy into three interdependent areas, in order of increasing difficulty for a computer: tactics, strategy and negotiation. Also keep in mind that I am speaking metaphorically when I use phrases like "ask the program..." and "the program says...". The actual process is not at all like talking with C3PO.

TACTICS is the easiest: "If I move from a to b with support from c, the unit in b will be dislodged unless supported or my support is cut." Human players are easily confused when the analysis gets complex, but computers are not confused by complexity, only slowed down. A correctly written program will invariably give the correct answer to any tactical question. The trick is to get to the point where the computer is asking itself relevant questions. Adjudication programs, such as the one I mentioned in DW25, are a necessary precursor to a tactically competent program. At the present time, any computer program that wins any game does it on the basis of tactical superiority.

STRATEGY takes over when the situation becomes too complex for an exact tactical solution. Strategy is the art of finding approximate solutions to real problems by inexact methods. The key words in this are art and inexact. Computers cannot be inexact, and do not engender art of any other conceptual processes. Computers

do not develop strategies, they learn them, or rather are taught by programmers. Solo Diplomacy in DW26 was an attempt to define a strategy for winning Diplomacy. It's not a bad attempt at a "me against the world" way of playing. It could even be extended to consider alliances. But the further you stray from tactical considerations, the less effective any programmed strategy or mix of strategies will be.

NEGOTIATION is the real sticking point. A program that could negotiate in the usual sense is far, far beyond anything that has ever been done. Such a program could probably also pass the Turing test*. Negotiation implies understanding, trust, mistrust, self-interest and therefore self awareness.

So what can be done? First, a tactically competent program is trivial in concept, if somewhat tedious to implement, and of very limited usefulness. Consider that each of the 22 original pieces has (about) 5 possible valid orders, so there are about 3×10^{17} different first moves in Diplomacy. Any attempt at brute force tactical analysis is doomed.

Second, a strategically sophisticated program is a reasonable goal. A lot of strategy along the lines suggested in Solo Diplomacy could be coded. It would be wise to try to include all of the concepts of Diplomacy. A good first cut would be to include all to the concepts in Mark Berch's Lexicon of Diplomacy** in the program. This would involve a great deal of work, but might result in a somewhat acceptable player.

Finally, for negotiation, we make a deep cut in our expectations. The first

problem is language. Computer Diplomacy Players in DW21 suggested that negotiations be carried out by means of symbols. I think that this is the right idea. I propose that the natural symbols for negotiation are the moves themselves, maps and supply center charts. That is, that players negotiate by exchanging proposed sets of moves, with no accompanying text. This would be very cumbersome for the human players, but intelligible to the computer. A very few additional symbols would make things easier, like a question mark, an "agreed" and a "denied". Negotiation proposals could be fragmentary rather than complete sets of orders.

This would be a mechanical basis for negotiations, but the important questions of what to negotiate about, who to trust, and when to stab remain. From the viewpoint of formal game theory, essentially nothing is known about these.

 *The classic test proposed to answer the question "can this machine think" or "is this machine intelligent". In the test, an examiner questions two concealed respondents, one of which is a computer. If the examiner cannot reliably determine which is the human, the machine is deemed to have passed the test.

**The Lexicon of Diplomacy is available from Mark Berch (492 Naylor Place, Alexandria, VA 22304) for \$1.25.

((David Dyer is the resident expert for computers for the pages of DW. I spoke with Dave and from time to time he will be contributing articles (and possibly answering questions) on the use of the computer in the Diplomacy hobby. How about "Helgoland Byte" as the title for his column?

While I was speaking with Dave we talked about all of the possibilities for Diplomacy play if we all had a home computer and a telephone interface. Hopefully he will be able to compile this into an article. I found the possibilities intriguing, maybe you will also. JHJ))

UNORTHODOX OPENINGS, #2

The Lapland Lurch:

F StPsc ~ Fin

MARK BERCH

"We can leave out of consideration any move for the northern fleet except that to Gulf of Bothnia: the move to Finland... achieves nothing the normal move does not."

-Richard Sharp, "The Game of Diplomacy"

"F StP(sc)-Bot is the only reasonable opening for that unit."

-Rod Walker, "The Gamers Guide to Diplomacy"

Wrong! Similar language appears in nearly all articles on Russian Openings. But opening moves exhibit tremendous variety and the "correct" opening depends on a myriad of circumstances. The word "always", with one exception (A Con-Bul), simply does not belong in these discussions. Those who think otherwise have blinders on.

There are three types of reasons/circumstances for which F StP(sc)-Fin is actually the better move: psychologically, tactically and strategically. Each will be discussed in turn.



The psychological reason is the only one I have ever seen in print or heard mentioned. It is also the weakest. Here, you are confident of taking Swe in Fall 1901, so the path does not matter. By going via Finland you show that you trust your German ally and haven't any designs on Baltic at all - because you are so confident of taking Sweden. This approach has some obvious drawbacks. How sure can you be of such things in Winter 1900? Also, while you are trying to say, "See how I trust you!" the German player may hear, "I'll do anything to please! If you say it, I'll believe it, and that'll settle it! I'm a sucker!" This ploy has a decent chance of success with a novice German, poor chances with an intermediate, and none whatsoever with an experienced player. I do not recommend your telling the German player that you will open this way for this reason: it may only tempt F Kie-Den.

The second reason is tactical. That is, F Fin can do something that F Bot can't. If you think the circumstance will occur, or just want to be prepared in case it might, then Fin is your place.

Suppose you anticipate F Den-Swe, A Yor/Edi-Nwy in Fall 1901. E/G are at least loosely allied and will be hitting F in Spring 1902. You anticipate, then, Swe going to Germany, and StP going to England. You may then expect Spring 1902 to see A Nwy-Fin and F Den-Swe. F Bot can only block one of these, but F Fin can block them both, since a standoff in Sweden will foil A Nwy-Fin.

Actually, the situation isn't that simple. Germany could foil you by doing F Den H, letting you slip into Swe, in which case it didn't matter whether you were in Finland or Bothnia. But Germany might not want to show such restraint. And England might not relish the thought of F Sweden retreating to Ska in Autumn 1902. Anyway, with F Finland you have the option, with F Bothnia, you don't.

Finland could be covered with a unit built in StP. However, you might not be able to build there (preferring to cover StP with A Mos) or you might want to build F StP(nc) which can't guard Finland. But even if you do build A StP (or F StPsc), unless you're willing to give up Sweden altogether and do F Both-Fin; A StP-Fin, doing A StP-Fin (plus F Both-Swe) risks A Nwy-StP. By contrast,

A StP-Fin, F Fin-Swe will leave StP open only if Germany lets you move into Sweden, which means that you will at least have some compensation (Sweden) should you lose StP.

In summary, if you think Eng/Ger will want to do A Nwy-Fin, F Den-Swe in Spring 1902 - a reasonable and ordinary expression of an E/G alliance, then Finland is the best place to throw the monkey wrench into.

The third and potentially most important reason is strategic. You've been denied Sweden in Fall 1901, you are likely to view this as a very belligerent act, done by a Germany intent on war. While this is sometimes the case, it frequently is not. Germany may be doing this as a favor to England, who may be concerned about losing Norway in Spring 1902 and thus is hesitant about allying with Germany against France. Or perhaps it's a favor to Austria or Turkey. Or possibly Germany just doesn't want Russia to grow quite so fast. This is particularly true if Russia enters Bla, Gal or even StP in Spring 1901. Germany finds the idea of three Russian builds in Winter 1901 intolerable. Or Germany may wish to signal to Russia that he is not to be taken for granted. At this stage it may be that neither party really wants war.

The problem is, with F Bot hovering over the very sensitive Baltic Sea, Germany may be unwilling to take any chances. Perhaps F Kie will be built. You naturally urge him to war with England. While Germany may be interested, F Kie-Hel/Hol will likely be viewed as too risky with F Bot. F Fin makes it much easier. Thus, by reducing the aggressive potential of your fleet, you make it easier for Germany to turn west, and make him less dependent on England as an ally. If you feel you will want this low profile after a Fall 1901 clash, plan for it with F StPsc-Fin.

Please do not misunderstand. I am not saying that F Fin is always the best way to go - for two reasons. The first is that in most cases, F StPsc-Both is correct. I used it myself in the present DW Demo game. If you feel that, as of Winter 1900, Germany has not made up his mind on Sweden, then F Bot-Bal is a powerful threat, and may well tip the balance. And second, there are cases when F StPsc-Fin is not correct, but neither is F StPsc-Bot!!!

The Livonian Lunacy:

F StPsc~Lvn

That's right, I said F StPsc~Lvn. Madness you say? Perhaps, perhaps not.

The situation here is that you are virtually certain that Germany will stand you out of Sweden. Ideally, you also think that Germany will not do A Ber-Kie (perhaps A Ber-Sil), though this is not essential.

In the usual situation, F Bot and F Den eye each other nervously after Spring 1901. You can do one of two things. You can go for Sweden anyway, hoping for the best. But if he does F en-Swe, you've allowed Germany the double use of his fleet - for taking Denmark and standing you out of Sweden. Or you could do Bot-Bal. That's terrible for Germany, but, unless Germany has serious problems elsewhere (unlikely if Germany is both a good player and, as above, virtually certain to go to Sweden) it probably won't get you a supply center. The usual course is to threaten to go to Bal, either in Fall 1901 if firm promises are not tendered, or Spring 1902 if the standoff does occur. The problem is that the Spring 1902 move is easily blocked if a new fleet is raised, and the Fall 1901 threat is just not too credible. The move is rarely done. From Germany's point of view it's not realistic to do F Den-Baltic. F Bot-Swe is too tempting

a choice for most Russians to pass up, he says to himself. And if F Den-Bal succeeds, I lose Den and Russia gets Sweden. So the odds are high that Germany will ignore the Fall 1901 Baltic threat, and will be prepared for it in Spring 1902.

But Livonia changes all of that. If you tell Germany that you will move F Liv-Bal, he will pretty much have to believe you. What else could you have had in mind? Unlike F Both, there is no other tempting choice. If your move is blocked, then again Sweden is open. If it isn't blocked, then you are in Bal, much the same as the F Bot-Bal situation. The fun begins if he moves to the Baltic and you don't. Then he's not gained Denmark and if you went back to Both, German F Bal maybe out of the picture, Sweden-wise, as he still needs to take Denmark. This move is particularly effective if you can couple it with A Mos-StP-Fin in 1901. Anyway, the point is that if you want to use the Fall 1901 Baltic threat as a way to keep Germany out of Sweden, then F Liv-Bal is much more believable than F Bot-Bal.

Alternatively, you can do it to be the first to do it (or at least say you are the first to do it). You'll certainly make the GM's headline a lot easier to write!

HOUSERULES

~ they do
make a
difference

BRUX (Houserule) LINSEY

Variety is the spice of postal Diplomacy. There are perhaps as many different ways of gamesmastering as there are gamesmasters. This diversity, in my opinion, is surely one of the prime attractions of the hobby. In a sense, each GM is a shopkeeper; the players are the shoppers. A Diplomacy player need not choose blindly from among the many gamesmasters available. How does a GM "exhibit his wares" to potential players? What is his official, public statement as to exactly how he will run his games? The answer, of course, is his houserules. Houserules are an important and valuable tradition in postal Diplomacy. The Rulebook, accurate though it may be on most points, still leaves room for a world of variety in the play of the game -- especially the Postal Game, which presents literally dozens of situations not touched upon in the rules. It is the opinion of this writer that there are many different effects on the game that can be credited to variations among contrasting sets of houserules, and this article will attempt to examine in depth several of these effects.

It is interesting to note that the influence on play due to houserules can be

enormous in some cases (e.g. the length of the deadline interval), and extremely minute in others (such as the ruling on pandin's Paradox, a situation which has never occurred). I will start by examining a few cases where the houserules are likely to drastically affect the game, and then move to some less consequential examples.

First, let us look at a very important houserule: the frequency of deadlines. According to the Rulebook, orders are due once every fifteen minutes. The U.S. Postal Service would indeed be miraculous if it permitted postal Diplomacy to adhere to this schedule, wouldn't it? Most GMs prefer to run their games at four week intervals. It is my contention that the difference in deadline intervals could -- and probably would -- lead to enormously different playing styles in the games. In fact, this example is a good one because the very alliance structures would likely be affected.

Suppose in the two-week game you have reached 1908 with an 11 center Turkey to your ally's 16 center Russia, with the remaining 7 centers divided among three countries. Will you allow him to win and yourself settle for second place, if this is his request? Or will you make an attempt to organize the rest of the board into an eleventh-hour alliance and try to stop him? In the two week game, you may well be better off taking second place. Unless you have a large phone budget, it will be next to impossible to plan the intricate details of each season's moves necessary to stop the Russian from his win. Two weeks just isn't enough time for delicate negotiations like this, where the slightest screwup invites disaster. Most often you would make the best of a bad job, and settle for second place.

The four week game is an entirely different matter, however. Under this houserule, you have ample time to arrange and confirm the fine tactical points of your diplomatic coup. In this circumstance, if the remaining small powers still have an interest in the game's outcome, it will be much easier to do the negotiation necessary to thwart Russia's winning bid. Therefore this option becomes much more attractive to second-place Turkey, and is more likely to be pursued.

The end game is not the only phase of the game affected by the length of the deadline interval. The whole game is influenced by it. Suppose you, as Russia now, wish to open F Sev-Bla without antagonizing Turkey. In two weeks, you may not be able to get his permission -- but given four weeks, there will be more time for you to persuade him to allow the move. There is time to argue back and forth, dream up a good excuse, or what-have-you. If you are a competent Russia, the probability of Turkish retaliation decreases substantially as the deadline interval (and therefore, your time for negotiation) increases. The frequency of deadlines is perhaps the most influential of all houserule on the course of the game.

Now I will take a look at another houserule which can affect a game tremendously: the allowance or disallowance of black press. Generally, press is a medium for insulting, threatening, entertaining, coaxing and other forms of persuasion. Black press, for the uninitiated, is simply press "signed" by a player other than the one who actually submitted it. And if black press is permitted, then a release along the lines of "Austria to Germany: I am going to ATTACK you!" has far less credibility than it would in a non-black press game. If I am Germany and you are Austria, and that bit of press appears in our game report; you'd better have a good explanation for it -- unless the GM's houserules permit black press, in which case I'll probably keep observing our agreement to leave Tyrolia and Bohemia vacant. The difference in the course of the game due to different houserules concerning press is probably clear -- it can be altered drastically.

Here's another example involving black press. In my zine, The Voice of Doom, the houserules allow only "April Fool's" black press. In other words, I permit black press only on the first deadline following April 1 each year. Further, although the houserules clearly state this, the players are not, as a rule, reminded before April. The effects could then become very interesting. If Germany is a player in many other zines, unaware of this special rule because he is overextended; then Russia might see his chance and

write something like the above example: "Austria to Germany: I am going to attack you!". Austria, thinking that Germany is aware of the "April Fool's" rule, doesn't bother to disown the press release -- and as a result Germany attacks him! Unlikely? Perhaps. But this is just one more example of a possible variation in the game's strategy due to houserules.

Moving to still another situation, let us consider two common systems of combining seasons in North American zines. Some GMs combine only the retreats with other season -- the winter builds and removals are always done separately. This results in what is often called a three season game year (a misnomer; All Diplomacy games have five season years consisting of spring moves, summer retreats, fall moves, autumn retreats and winter adjustments). Anyway, there are other zines which use the so-called "two season game year"; winter is (usually, at least) combined with the spring moves. The "two season game year" makes the game go faster but it also necessitates many more conditional orders by the players -- orders like "if France builds A Par do 'A', if he builds A Mar or F Bre do 'B', all other cases do 'C'." Suppose then that you are England, and you'd like to attack France -- but the board situation is such that you must build F Lon to do so effectively, an act of war by your previous agreements. Suppose further that France is the type of player who writes you one post card per month, and presumably sends in orders in the same careless manner (such a nincompoop ought to be stabbed anyway, but I depress...). What do you do?

In the two season game, the build will be executed at the same deadline as the subsequent spring moves. True, your French victim could "see" the attack coming if he carefully devises a set of conditional orders, but you know he probably won't bother. In other words, he MIGHT order "if England builds F Lon do 'A', otherwise do 'B'."...but you know he's too lazy! Proceed then with the attack -- the houserule is in your favor and he won't be able to retaliate until the fall.

In the three season game, however, he will see that you have built F Lon before he sends in his spring moves. His response

to your stab will come one crucial season earlier. Then, perhaps, you will want to reconsider your strategy and postpone the attack.

The above examples all illustrate situations where a particular houserule is likely to have a profound effect on the game. Now I'd like to move on to some houserules which can produce only an occasional, or less noticeable, effect.

Let's discuss that notorious Rulebook contradiction, the unwanted convoy. I shall cite an example which has been published often. You are England, firmly allied with Russia against France. You have F Nth, Russia has F Nwy and F Ska. France has A Bel and A Ruh. You have learned from a reliable source that France intends to move A Bel-Hol, A Ruh S A Bel-Hol this season. For whatever strategic reasons, you wish to foil the French move at all costs and take Holland yourself. If you are familiar with this example, then you already know that you can order F Nth C FRENCH A Bel-Hol and ask Russia to dislodge your fleet. Therefore the convoy is disrupted and the French move fails -- plus you reserve the right to retreat to Hol! Well, some GMs will permit this strategy, citing the "dislodged convoy" rule; but other GMs would ignore the English order and let the French take Holland because, according to the Rulebook, an army may move to an adjacent province if unopposed. A good set of houserules will cover the situation one way or the other. How are you, the English player, affected? Suppose the houserules give precedence to the "dislodged convoy" rule. Then your optimal move is to order the convoy as above and ask Russia to dislodge your fleet. Follow this with a retreat into Holland. On the other hand, if the houserules you are playing under give precedence to the conflicting rule (an army may make its move if unopposed); then, remembering that your goal is to get Hol, your best move is F Nth-Hol, and hope France misses his moves.

Some GMs, including myself, permit the players to impersonate the GM. Thus it is a legitimate diplomatic ploy to write a readjudication for a Voice of Doom game, sign it "BRUX Linsey", and send it to another player, hoping he'll screw up his next set of orders.

In contrast, there are some GMs who expressly forbid this. Get caught, and you're out of the game! Certainly, the different rulings on this point would have varying effects on the strategy employed by a player who is clever enough to try such a ploy.

One more example will suffice before I conclude this discussion. Let me dig up one of my more obscure houserules. Houserule III.B states in part that "...an incorrect coast will disqualify an order." Therefore F Bar-StPsc does not succeed. How can this possibly affect the play of the game? Suppose you're England again (well, I can't help it, let's say that I have an English fixation) and you've promised Germany that you'll take StP, and promised Russia that you won't. Under the houserule given, you could intentionally miswrite the order as "F Bar-Stpsc" if you choose to keep your promise to Russia. You would point out to the Russian exactly what you are going to do, citing the houserule which will cause the move to fail; but you would plead carelessness in an after-the-fact letter to Germany, saying that it was an honest mistake on your part. Under different houserules, the move might succeed, and in order to avoid taking StP while still placating Germany you'd have to dream up something else -- perhaps F Bar-Sevnc?

So, it must be observed that houserules affect the game of postal Diplomacy in all sorts of ways, some gigantic and some tiny. I hope I haven't conveyed a negative connotation in saying so; in fact I feel that the variations created by different sets of houserules are an extremely valuable asset. There are those who would have standardized sets of houserules for all games -- to them I say "phooey"! The way things are now, each player can shop around, using the various sets of houserules as a guide to the GMs' techniques, and make informed selections in finding a game to suit his tastes. Indeed, the really good player will study the houserules for the zine he is playing in, familiarize himself with them, and use them to his advantage. I for one am very intrigued by the wide scope of games thus offered to the potential players. This is what gives the postal hobby much of its character and attraction.

1980~AY

DW DEMONSTRATION GAME

GM: ERIC VERHEIDEN
COMMENTARY: DON DITTER

SPRING 1902

AUS Scott Marley F Tri-Ven, A Vie S A Bud, A Bud H, A Ser-Bul(ret Gre, OTB).
ENG Bernard Simpson F Lon-Eng, F Nth S A Nwy, A Nwy H, F MAO-Gas.
FRA Robert Segeant A Par-Pic, A Spa-Gas, A Bre S A Spa-Gas, F Mar-Spasc,
F Por S F Mar-Spasc.
GER Lee Kendter Sr. F Kie-Hel, F Den S F Kie-Hel, A Ber-Kie, A Mun-Sil, A Hol H, A Bel H.
ITA Hal Norman A Ven-Tri, A Tun-Alb, F Ion C A Tun-Alb, F Nap-Apu.
RUS Mark Berch A Swe-Fin, A StP-Fin, A War-Sil, A Gal-Bud, A Rum S TURKISH A Bul-Ser,
F Sev S A Rum.
TUR Peter Reese A Bul-Ser, A Con-Bul, F Ank-Con, F Smy-Aeg.

SPRING 1902

This season makes the alliance picture much clearer. Germany is allied with France against England. G/R have a non-aggression agreement, the bounce in Sil was certainly agreed to by both players. Neither want a two front war. Given a hostile Russian, the Englishman has a guess in the North; A Nwy-Fin or A Nwy S RUS A StP-Fin, instead he does nothing and hands Nwy over to the Russian. In the South, I/A cannot get together. Italy must be fairly certain that he has a Russian ally, or the attack on Austria is suicidal. The Austrian moves have been horrendous from the start and this season is no exception, he seems content to roll over and play dead. As a result R/T has gained Ser and freed its F Ank for Mediterranean action.

FALL 1902

After his non-guess in the Spring, the English convoy back to Britain is a wise move. The unit will be a real defensive asset there and he can hope that the Russian will give him help versus Germany. The North Sea will fall in Spring 1903, but England can still be around for quite a while with good defensive play and a bit of luck. In the East, Austria's wish has been granted--he's a goner. Isn't the East looking familiar to the last Demo game? One wonders if I/R can pull it off this time. I doubt it. The Turk is in excellent position and his alliance with Russia has been too smooth. More likely we'll have a classic East vs. West confrontation: G/F vs. R/T, with E, I and A caught in the middle. The Russian has certainly dominated the first two game years, positionally and diplomatically.

FALL 1902

AUS A Vie S A Bud; A Bud S A Vie; F ~~Tri~~-Ven/annih/; A ~~StP~~-Ser/annih/.
 ENG F Eng S F Nth; F Nth C A Nwy-Yor; A Nwy-Yor; F ~~MAO~~ H/d/ret NAO Irs Wes Naf OTB.
 FRA F Por-MAO; F Spasc S F Por-MAO; A Gas S A Bre; A Pic S A Bre; A Bre S A Pic.
 GER F Hel-Nth; F Den S F Hel-Nth; A Kie S F Den; A Hol S A Bel; A Bel H; A Mun-Sil.
 ITA A Ven-Tri; A Alb S A Ven-Tri; F Apu-Adr; F Ion S A Alb.
 RUS A StP-Nwy; F Swe S A StP-Nwy; A War-Sil; A Gal-Bud; A Rum-Ser; F Sev-Rum.
 TUR A Ser-Gre; F Aeg S A Ser-Gre; A Bul S RUS A Rum-Ser; F Con S A Bul.

Supply Chart:

Aus: Vie Bud ~~Tri~~ ~~StP~~...2...even
 Eng: Home ~~MAO~~...3...-1
 Fra: Home Spa Por...5...even
 Ger: Home Bel Hol Den...6...even
 Ita: Home Tum TRI...5...+1
 Rus: Home Swe Rum NWY SER...8...+2
 Tur: Home Bul GRE...5...+1

WINTER 1902

The Austrian player drops - an indication of his level of interest and probably the extent of his diplomatic efforts. The Russian has been very coy in avoiding a two-front war, yet making gains on both fronts. The build in StP(nc) must concern F/G. Sooner or later the R/G non-aggression will end. The build of A Ven leaves Italy very vulnerable in the Ion, if Turkey can get a fleet in Greece. Italy is betting everything on his Russian alliance.

WINTER 1902

England retreats F MAO to Wes. Removes F Wes
 Italy builds A Ven.
 Russia builds F StPnc. & A Mos.
 Turkey builds F Smy.

SPRING 1903

AUS A Vie S A Bud; A ~~MAO~~ S A Vie/annih/.
 ENG F Eng S F Nth; F ~~MAO~~ S RUS F Swe-Den/d/ret Lon Edi Nwg Ska OTB, A Yor-Lvp.
 FRA F MAO-Eng; F Spasc-MAO, A Gas-Bur; A Pic-Bur; A Bre H.
 GER F Hel-Nth; F Den S F Hel-Nth; A Kie S F Den; A Hol S A Bel; A Bel H; A Mun-Ber.
 ITA A Tri S RUS A Ser-Bud; A Alb-Gre; F Ion S A Alb-Gre; A Ven-Alb; F Adr C A Ven-Alb.
 RUS F StPnc-Bar; A Nwy H; F Swe H; A Ser-Bud; A Gal S A Ser-Bud; A War S A Gal; A Mos-Ukr;
 F Rum H.
 TUR F Con-Aeg; A Gre-Swe; A Bul S A Gre-Ser; F Aeg-Gre; F Smy-Eas.

SPRING 1903

Notice that G/R did not bounce in Sil, no doubt a Russian request because he had other ideas for A War. If R/I are allied, the Fall season should tell it. R/I can take and hold Ser and Gre, reducing the Turk to 4. (re: F Ion-Aeg; A Alb-Ser (S) by A Tri & A Bud; F Rum-Bulec) In the West England loses Nth and moves into defensive position. F/G will certainly not gain a thing in 1903 and possibly nothing in 1904, if England can outguess them.

FALL 1903

Italy is in trouble. If Russia were going to stab Turkey this would have been the turn to do it. The three Turkish fleets

are now bearing down on the Ion and there's no way the Italian can hold Ser and Tri in 1904 without losing Ion. The move of an army to Rum is very strong and should virtually guarantee that R/T can roll over Italy very quickly. F/G must be getting very concerned at this point. I/R could still ally, but given the game thus far, I don't believe it will happen --- the R/T alliance is too powerful and they have been working too well together. In the West, France prepares for his assault on England in 1904. The German moves are curious, I guess he was afraid of England dislodging his F Nth as it could retreat to Lon. Germany will be very interested to see where the Russian builds in the Winter - he must be on guard to a land blitz.

FALL 1903

AUS A ~~W~~ H /d/ ret Tyro, Boh, OTB.
ENG F Edi-Nth, Lpl-Yor, F Eng-Lon.
FRA F MAO-NAO, Spasc-MAO, A Gas-Spa, A Bre H, A Pic H.
GER A Hol-Edi, F Nth C A Hol-Edi, F Den S F Nth, A Bel H, A Kie S F Den, A Ber H.
ITA A Alb-Ser, A Tri S A Alb-Ser, A ~~Gre~~-Bul /d/ret Alb, OTB, F Ion S TUR F Eas-Aeg, F Adr S F Ion.
RUS F Bar-Nwg, A Nwy H, F Swe H, A Gal-Vie, A Bud S A Gal-Vie, A War-Gal, A Ukr-Rum, F Rum-Sev
TUR F Aeg-Gre, A Bul S F Aeg-Gre, A ~~Gre~~-Alb /annih/, F Con-Aeg, F Eas-Ion.

Supply Chart:

Aus: ~~W~~ H, ~~Boh~~...0...out
Eng: Home...3...even
Fra: Home Spa Por...5...even
Ger: Home Bel Hol Den...6...even
Ita: Home Tun Tri SER...6...+1
Rus: Home Nwy Swe ~~Gre~~ Rum VIE BUD...9...+1
Tur: Home Bul Gre...5...+1

WINTER 1903

The Russian continues to play it coy, by building his army where it can go to any front. No use antagonizing anyone until you are ready to attack --- right? There is still some probability the Russian will ally with Italy --- less than 10 percent, I'd say. Russia is in the enviable position of being able to choose allies. The questions are: Do you agree with my prediction of R/T? Can England hold out against F/G/R in 1904? Will G/R come to blows? If so, when? These questions and others should be answered next issue.

WINTER 1903

Italy retreats A Gre to Alb. Builds F Nap.
Russia builds A Mos.
Turkey builds A Con.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF VARIANTS

FRED C. DAVIS, JR.

There have been Diplomacy variants almost from the beginning of the hobby. Strictly speaking, any game in which the Rulebook is not followed to the letter is a variant, such as a game permitting units to move directly between Spain and North Africa, or permitting the "Coastal Crawl." There have been provisions for play with less than seven players in the back of the Rulebook ever since 1961, although these suggestions were not originally called variants. Between 1963 and 1967, many people played the 5-man and 6-man games listed in the Rulebook, and some postal games were started.

The first deliberately designed Diplomacy variant was Youngstown. This was created by several members of the Youngstown University Diplomacy Club in the mid-60's (Jack Tucker, John Koning, John Smythe, et.al.). They frequently had more than seven players present at their weekly FTF games. They created a 10-man game by adding eastern and southern extensions to the Regular board and establishing India, China and Japan as additional Great Powers.

Rod Walker saw the original board on a visit to Youngstown. When he returned home, he created an improved version, called Youngstown II, and printed it in his zine

in early 1968. YV II was the first variant to make use of boxes to effectuate long-distance and around-the-world movements by fleets. Despite its flaws (a weak Russia; stalemates), Youngstown has been played the most of all postal variants. One reason may be its comparative simplicity. Several other people have made efforts to break the stalemate lines and otherwise improve this variant. The most common version played in America is YV IV, by Andy Phillips, which clarified and slightly improved the Walker version. In the U.K., Richard Walkerdine's 1972 version, known as YV VI, is the one usually played. (There are four minor differences between IV and VI, of which the most important is that F's in Suez may convoy in VI). In Youngstown VIII, Dick Vedder added the rest of Africa, and added Transvaal, to make it an 11-player game. Walker completed the globe by adding the Americas in a 12-Power version called Youngstown XII in 1978.

Other earlier variants included several Middle Earth versions, based on the Tolkien trilogy. The first non-Rulebook postal variant ever played was Middle Earth II, designed by Don Miller of Wheaton, MD. This was first published in 1969. Don was the GM for this game, which I believe was eventually designated 1965Ae.

The question of how to designate these games for Postal purposes arose early, since it was almost from the beginning that Boardman numbers were suitable only for Regular games. Don Miller came up with the concept of using lower case letters following a "Boardman-type" designator, to identify each Postal variant by its type. He began with the letter "a" for the first postal variant, which was a game of "3 x 3, Tur-

key omitted" (a team game), and went down the line in order of receipt of information on the games. Since his own Middle Earth II was the fifth variant design to be played postally, that was given the designator "e". Thus, the oldest designs have only a single letter designator, or a two-letter designator starting with "a". The most recent designs bear two-letter designators in which the first letter is "h", "i", or "j". It should be noted that this lettering system refers to the order in which the Custodian has the game called to his attention, so it does not necessarily reflect the exact order in which the postal games began. The numbers issued for variant games are called Miller Numbers in honor of their inventor. Unfortunately, no Miller Nos. are issued for games that have never been played by mail, although in a few cases a designator was given to a game which never got off the ground.

Don Miller became the first Miller Number Custodian. He held the post from 1965 to 1971. He then turned it over to Lew Pulsipher, who began issuing numbers beginning with 1972Abu. It should be noted that there was no attempt to classify the variants by category. Back in the days when there were less than 50 known variants and maybe only 200 people in the entire postal hobby, such a thing was unnecessary. Whenever a Miller Number Custodian found he was unable to continue, he would pass the job on to another person. In most cases, this exchange was made smoothly. Lew turned the Custodianship over to Conrad von Metzke, who spread the concept of the Miller Numbers to Europe by issuing designators to several British and Continental games. He also started the custom of having Assistant MNC's for overseas areas.

Many of the early variants, except for the Tolkien ones, had concentrated on special rules, such as the creation of special pieces (e.g. Double Armies) or new types of moves (e.g. Spain-North Africa), played without alteration to the Regular board, or with only superficial changes to the map. I think that there was a general reluctance, prior to 1968, to alter the Board as given by Calhauer, except along the edges.

The Tolkien variants may have been

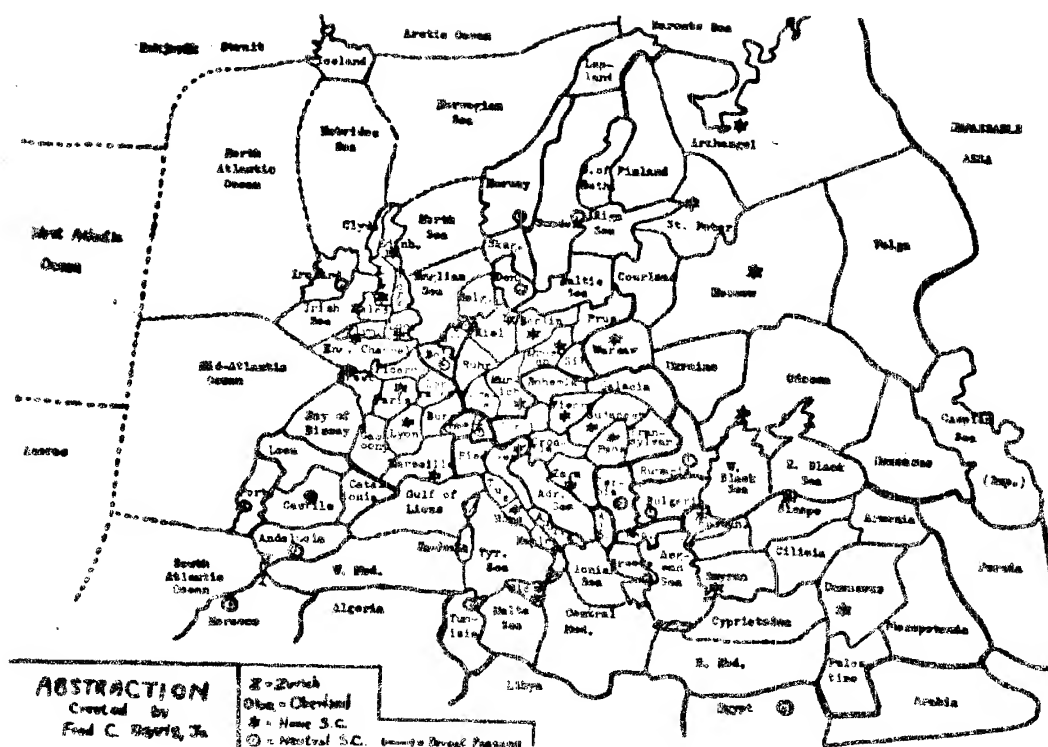
only a fad - there seem to be very few of them being played currently - but their importance is that they permitted variant designers to break out of the confines of a map of Europe, to construct a variant design anywhere in the world, or even out of it. There were some good Tolkien designs, and some, like Mordor Vs. the World, with a gigantic Mordor surrounded by normal Powers, which were badly unbalanced. As time went on, most players came to realize that play balance was usually more important than historical accuracy, just as, in the Regular game, it's important that England and Turkey start out at equal strength, although this is historical nonsense.

* * *

I came into the hobby just as Rod Walker was starting a series of "Imperialism" games in his zines in 1968. Rod had used the title, "Imperialism", for all of the wargames he had invented since high school days, so the early titles had nothing to do with Diplomacy. However, with Imperialism VII and VII-R, he created some of the most well-designed and elaborate Dip variants which had ever been seen. These designs featured enormous maps of Europe and environs, with each Power beginning with 7 units and 7 Home SC's. There were also special Convoy rules. These games were too large to have been played FTF unless they could have been left standing for weeks. However, they set a high standard for all future designers. My position as Italy in Imperialism VII-R (1968Tam) was my introduction to variant gaming.

When I sat down to study the Regular game, I saw two flaws almost immediately. One was that several of the provinces were badly shaped, either from a historical viewpoint, or from the point of where the shape would or wouldn't permit a piece to move. This included the historical violations caused by the prohibition against moving to places like Ireland and Sicily, which were integral parts of the U.K. and Italy, respectively, at that time. The other flaw lay in the convoy rules, which I felt were inadequate and too restrictive.

I had expressed some of my unhappiness with the Regular board in my first Diplo-



macy article, which was printed in Don Miller's DIPLOMANIA. Rod Walker encouraged me to go ahead with my concepts, as he was interested in bringing out a series of variant designs. These came out under the "Aberration" heading, which meant nothing except that they were considered experimental. They were all published in his ZOTHIQUE in 1969. "Aberration I" was the test game for what became Abstraction. I played in it to get a better feel, while Rod was the GM. "Aberration II" used the same map but different rules. Other games in this series featured Rod's designs.

After "Ab I" ended (I won), some additional changes were made, and, in order to maintain the "Ab" nomenclature, I dubbed it Abstraction. This game introduced my main contribution to the variant sub-hobby; namely, the piggyback convoy rule, which permits fleets to carry armies around the board at a faster pace, in what are called Army/Fleets. Without A/F's, designs fea-

turing a great deal of water, such as Atlantica or the global variants, would have been impossible. Abstraction was first published in its final form in Don Turnbull's ALBION in 1970. (Turnbull introduced both Regular and variant Diplomacy to Britain). ALBION had a fairly large North American circulation in those days, so it received good publicity on both sides of the pond.

Abstraction tried to reach a middle ground between the small number of units and SC's in the Regular game, and the very large number in such designs as Imperialism VII-R, while simultaneously improving the map in several areas. My solution was to give every ordinary Power 8 provinces and 4 Home SC's. Russia received 10 and 5. Austria was given one additional ordinary province for defensive purposes. The entire south shore of the Mediterranean was included, as it ought to be in any scenario featuring all of Europe. The wild move from Norway to St. Pete was eliminated. The design also inadvertently eliminated

most of the stalemate lines, although I had not been consciously seeking that remedy.

I'd like to think of Abstraction as a milestone in the variant sub-hobby. It's one of the few designs which continues to be played after so many years, and it was selected by Richard Sharp in his book, The Game of Diplomacy, as "perhaps the only variant which improves upon the original." Since its introduction, the A/F Convoy rules have been adopted by many other designers, sometimes with additional refinements. I've also used it in all of my other designs except United States Diplomacy, which is the only one of the "Davis" variants where naval units are not extremely important.

Diplomacy variants can be divided into three general classes. These are: 1. Games using the Regular board, but different rules; 2. Games using new scenarios, but the regular rules; 3. Games using both new or expanded maps and changes in the rules. Most of the earliest variants fell into either the first or second class, but most of the modern designs are in the third class.

Among the different scenarios are designs which merely expand the map of Europe; designs which use entirely different areas, such as England, North America, or the Roman Empire; global variants; and designs based on interstellar space. Designs can also be classified as falling into Classical, Medieval, Napoleonic, 19th Century, 20th Century, and Future Time Periods. There are also variants allotting economic values to every province, with associated treasuries used for construction of new units, maintenance of current forces, lend/lease, and bribery. Other rules give special characteristics to certain units such as aircraft, submarines, Double armies, units moving at double-speed, and units lead by Heroes or Wizards. At last count there were about 550 known Diplomacy variants. While most of them continue to have between 7 and 9 Great Powers, some have as many as 15. One, using the Regular board, can be played with either 11 people with 3 units each, 17 with two, or 34 with one apiece.

* * *

When I got ready to start publishing at the end of 1971, I made a list of the people who were then publishing zines. A partial list of publishers carrying variant games in their gamezines includes the following: Joseph Antosiak, ANSCHLUS; John Boyer, IMPASSABLE; Steve Cartier (Dan Alderson), WILD 'N WOOLY; Mike & Betsy Childers, LAPUTA; Andy Phillips, SHAFT; John Piggott, ETHIL THE PROC*; Lew Pulsipher, BLOOD & IRON; Don Turnbull, ALBION*; Payton Turpin, THERMOPLAE; Conrad von Metzke, COSTAGUANA; Rod Walker, EREHWON and ZOTHIQUE; Mark Weidmark, MARCUS; and Charles Wells, LONELY MOUNTAIN. (* = British publisher). As of 1980, Turnbull is the only one of these people still publishing a gamezine (COURIER).

However, several of the variant designers from the earlier days of the postal hobby are still around. The most brilliant designer is probably Lew Pulsipher. He is also the most prolific, with over 30 designs listed in the North American Variant Bank Catalog. Lew has published a book of some of his better designs, Diplomacy Games & Variants. Lew was cranking out designs in 1969, and is still going strong.

Don Miller was the leading designer of the early days. He invented Hyper-economic Diplomacy, which is probably the most complex variant ever designed. He was most helpful to me when I was a novice. Because of eye trouble, Don is no longer active in Diplomacy, but he still publishes a wargaming zine about once a year, along with some science fiction fanzines.

Dick Vedder designed many games based on historical themes from the Classical world. His tour de force was to design three different variants from the days of the Roman Empire which can all be played on the same board (Diadochi, Triumvirate, Imperator). I understand that he still follows the hobby from his post in Arizona.

Martin Janta-Polczynski of Belgium is the leading designer in continental Europe. Martin is an engineer and some of his games, which are quite complex, reflect his technical and mathematical training. One of his designs, Pseudo-Classical Dip, was voted the best design of 1978. Martin came up with the Rule Module concept, under

which certain rules can be "packaged" by themselves, for the use with almost any Diplomacy scenario.

According to the Variant Bank catalog, I am the third most prolific designer, after Miller, and Rod Walker is right behind me. Another designer of many games (albeit some are tongue-in-cheek is Greg Costikyan of New York.)

Conrad von Metzke did not design many original games, but he published many, and sometimes he made alterations in other designs. The work he did in organizing the variants in an orderly manner in his "Variant Number" project served to help those who came after him in reclassifying variants. He and Walker frequently worked together. Conrad became a father and got his law degree, and has dropped out of the hobby for about the 6th time. However, every time he dropped out he eventually came back, so don't discount the possibility that he may pop up again someday.

* * *

One interesting thing about the variant hobby has been the complete cooperation of Diplomacy's inventor, Allan Calhamer, and the owners of the copyright, in permitting this craziness to go on. Strictly speaking, any variant design which incorporates the rules of Diplomacy into its rules and/or uses any part of the original map for its board is violating that copyright. From a legalistic viewpoint, the only way to overcome this is to go the route followed by the publishers of the commercial game, Machiavelli, in which all of the Diplomacy rules and moves are rewritten in different language. Anyone who has played Diplomacy will recognize that Machiavelli is a variant, but by rephrasing everything, they have been able to produce a product which can be sold for a profit.

Fortunately, most of us are not interested in profits, so we have not had to go beyond incorporating by reference all parts of the Diplomacy Rulebook not otherwise amended by our variant designs. This saves a tremendous amount of work. When Diplomacy was owned by Games Research, Inc., I was in communication with its President, John Moot on the subject of variants. He

recognized that the postal hobby served a useful purpose by creating interest in the game, and thereby increasing sales. Following the same line of reasoning, he was not adverse to the publication of variants. This attitude has been continued by Avalon Hill, which bought the game from GRI in 1976.

At one point, I was corresponding with John Moot about the possibility of including a "variant package" in every Diplomacy set. The idea had originated with suggestions from Jeff Key and Lew Pulsipher that GRI publish a separate Tolkien variant. My suggestion was to include conference maps and rules for about three of the simpler variants. I had suggested Abstraction for one, as a basic conservative design; a Tolkien variant for another, since these were then so popular; with the third to be chosen from a completely different scenario. I think that if GRI had continued to produce Diplomacy, something of this sort would have eventually occurred.

There is a pirated edition of Diplomacy called "1914", which is being sold in a Portuguese translation in Brazil. This is actually a variant, in that Italy starts out with F Rome, and North Africa is a SC. This actually improves the game, in that Italy is no longer a weak sister, and I have suggested on occasion that players may enjoy playing the "Brazilian Variant" in FTF games.

Incidentally, the French translation of the rules used in the production of the officially licensed Common Market version of Diplomacy contain an error, which makes all games played by those rules variants. This error is a statement which says that a unit cannot support another unit into a third province unless the units are adjacent. Fortunately, French postal players are aware of the error, and have issued house rules to correct it.

* * *

The concept of having a universal variant bank, which would contain copies of all known variants, was conceived by Dick Vedder in 1969. Prior to that time, the Miller No. Custodians had received copies of new var-

iants as publishers submitted them in order to obtain numbers for new postal games, but they did not have copies of other designs unless they had collected them on their own. In addition, there was nothing in the MNC list of responsibilities which required them to offer these games for sale.

Dick Vedder spent several years gathering up all the variants he could find. Rod Walker's collection formed the base of the North American Variant Bank, with other Var variant buffs furnishing whatever they had. Old zines were also combed for forgotten designs. By the time Dick had finished cataloging everything and was ready to sell copies of the games to all comers, he found that he was running out of sufficient time to properly maintain the bank. Therefore, he turned over the bank to Dan Gallagher of Alexandria, Virginia, about 1974. Dan began publishing a newsletter, which was a combination of a catalog listing what designs he had in his files, and their prices, plus other news pertaining to the formulation and operation of the bank. There was a constant appeal to variant designers and publishers to be sure to send copies of their designs to the Bank. In late 1975, after publishing three issues, the press of other activities caused Dan to turn the Bank over to Dave Kadlecsek of San Jose, California.

Variant Banks had also been established by Hartley Patterson in England and Walter Luc Haas in Switzerland, sometime before 1975. I have been receiving Haas' zine, BUMM, since February 1975, and I know that he had already set up his Central European Variant Bank before then. The CEVB contained both English and German language rules for some of the games. Michael Liesnard also established a VB in Belgium, which featured original European designs, plus French translations of several of the American and British variants. There was a considerable exchange of photocopies of many variant rules and maps between the several variant banks during this period.

To the best of my knowledge, Burt Labelle, who followed Von Metzke as MNC, did not have his own variant bank. Robert Sacks, who succeeded him around December 1974, and held the MNC post for 4½ years,

probably had a large personal collection of variants, as he showed considerable knowledge of many of them when the re-classification issue arose. Sacks became very interested in the operation and coordination of the world's variant banks. Robert was wearing two hats, one as MNC, and a second as Chairman of the Diplomacy Variant Commission, which had been founded originally as a Committee of the IDA, to oversee variant activities. After a falling out between Sacks and the IDA Council, the DVC became an independent organization. It wasn't always clear to neutral observers as to when Sacks was speaking as MNC, and when he was speaking as the head of the DVC, but in any event, Robert believed that this combination of posts gave him the right to direct most of the activities within the variant sub-hobby. (I was a member of the DVC for a short period, but most of the leaders of the variant hobby who were not personal acquaintances of Sacks dropped out of that organization when it became clear that he wished to run everything his own way. Thus, the DVC never reached the status of being representative of the entire hobby.)

Sacks sought to coordinate the activities of the world's Variant Bank Custodians. The original concept of most of the Custodians was that they would simply work as equals with Robert Sacks, the MNC, and the Assistant MNC's who had been appointed for the U.K. and Europe. However, Sacks demanded absolute control over the Variant Bank Custodians. He also tried to force another person into the slot of U.K. Variant Bank Custodian. The others were not prepared to give the MNC such control over their operations. The end result was a complete break between the MNC and the V.B. Custodians. This was unfortunate for the hobby, but absolutely necessary from the point of view of the Variant Banks, which must retain their independence if they are to operate properly.

Meanwhile, I had been casually picking up variants out of the DipZines along the way, starting with Scottice Scripti, a 7 or 8-player game based on the Irish and Scots kingdoms in the Middle Ages. Simply by saving almost every de-

sign which came my way from 1969-on, I found that I had about the third or fourth largest variant collection in the hobby. In 1977, Dave Kadlecsek began to fade out as Custodian of the North American Variant Bank. He ceased issuing any publications and failed to answer some correspondence. I set up my files in a more orderly manner and created the North American Variant Bank - East, in order to have a backup bank available should the original bank fail.

Eventually, after a shake period of about a year when there was some genuine concern for the NAVB's safety, Rod Walker was able to obtain custody of the main bank, and to operate it as the NAVB - West. Rod and I exchanged copies of designs which were not in both banks, and established contacts with the Overseas banks. There are about 300 variants on file with NAVB-West, and I have about 100 on hand in the NAVB-East. If anything should happen to either of us, or if either bank should be destroyed by flood or fire, one Bank could be reestablished by photocopies from the other's files.

We also established a division of labor. For example, Rod prepared the NAVB Catalog, called ARDA #2, which is a complete listing of all the games on hand in the Bank, for the use of GM's and players wishing to play or study variants. I became the contact point for communications between the world's variant banks. It is easier to channel such communications through one person, especially with postage costs being so high. Another project has been to set up a variant bank in Canada, so that Canadians can purchase variants in their own currency. This was still under formation at the time this is being written.

* * *

For many years, several people deeply interested in variants have sort to establish a recategorization of the games into several logical classification. The major headings would be by type of game, such as Rule Changes with Regular Board, Europe

Extended, Other Areas, Global, Fantasy and Space. Within each major heading, there needs to be subdivisions for the time periods involved. Hartley Patterson came up with a written proposal on this back in 1975. A committee was then formed under the leadership of Conrad von Metzke, to come up with a definitive system. Pulsipher, Vedder, Walker, myself and others all contributed our knowledge and suggestions. In a publication called TALABWO, Von Metzke proposed a detailed system of "Variant Numbers." Unfortunately, this came to naught. Conrad and the committee could not get the support of the Miller Numbers Custodian, Robert Sacks, for this concept. Sacks had his own ideas on how the variants should be categorized. He held that no one except himself had the authority to introduce a new system.

At one point, there appeared to be a danger that two different sets of variant designators would be issued at the same time; Miller Nos. by Sacks, and Variant Numbers by Von Metzke. (In fact, I used a Variant No. for my Atlantica II-R game in DUSHWACKER). To avoid this breakdown, Walt Buchanan, then publisher of DIPLOMACY WORLD, suggested that we hold a worldwide referendum of all Diplomacy publishers, to see whether they would support Sacks or Von Metzke as the official issuer of variant postal game designators. (This was done in December 1976.) Under Walt's supervision, I mailed out the ballots and a neutral third party who was above reproach (Doug Beyerlein) counted them on their return. The referendum settled nothing, as there was an exact 50% division of support for each party. (There were a high number of abstentions, presumably from those publishers who weren't interested in variants). Unhappily, the air had been poisoned by charges and counter-charges. Soon after that, Von Metzke withdrew from the field.

In 1978, Der Garvey of Cork, Ireland, appeared on the scene with a new classification system. This used a double designator for each variant. One was for the map or scenario; the other for the type of rules used. Drawing on his own collection, and

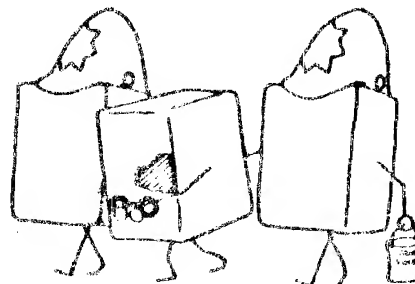
those of the several variant banks, Garvey had soon classified 550 variants under his system. As he was a computer programmer, he had this all on tapes. He was able to call up the information either alphabetically, by Variant Number, by author, or by country of origin. As of February 1979, with the cooperation of the other Variant Bank Custodians, this system was about complete. Then, Garvey was cut off from the world by the 19-week Irish Postal strike. By the time the strike had ended, Garvey had fallen in love, and he shortly dropped out of the hobby. End of the variant number system.

Walker went ahead on his own and published the NAVB Catalog (ARDA #2) at the end of 1979. This lists every game available in the NAVB, and the cost of same. The variants are listed both by category and alphabetically, for ease of finding. Rod made use of the work done by Von Metzke and Garvey, but did not follow their patterns completely. There are more categories under the ARDA system than were contemplated under the Variant Number scheme. This ought to make it easier for the prospective buyer to find exactly what he wants. However, the addition of more categories makes it more difficult for an observer to determine the nature of a game in a zine from its designator. The original idea had been to establish about seven broad categories, each with a distinctive letter, so that anyone who was into variants would immediately know into which classification a game fell. (This can normally be done if publishers would remember to show the name of each variant when they publish the game results. It would take only a second to show the name after a bunch of numbers and letters. I think this would really increase the interest in variants, guys.) In any case, nobody has said that the ARDA Catalog is perfect, but it has one overwhelming advantage over all other operations - it is in operation!

Meanwhile, Greg Costikyan had replaced Robert Sacks as the Miller Number Custodian in June 1979. A meaningful dialogue was begun between him and the Variant Bank Custodians. This came to a successful

conclusion. If all goes according to plan, Walker will expand the ARDA Catalog to include all known variants, and the ARDA nomenclature system will be used by the MNC to designate postal variant games, beginning January 1, 1981. The Variant Banks will identify all the games in their files by the same set of designators. There will probably be no attempt to re-number the older postal games, although any pubber with an ongoing game started in 1980 or earlier will have the option of obtaining a new number. The chances are that the title "Miller Number" will continue to be used as a generic term for the number issued to a specific postal game section.

I have seen about half of the 600 known variants. This number includes a separate count for each version of a variant, such as the 12 versions of the Youngstown Variant and the four versions of the Cline 9-Man Game. They vary from excellent to awful. They cover every historical period and half the areas of the world. If your curiosity is whetted, write to Rod Walker for a copy of the ARDA Catalog. The cost is \$1.00. His address is: 1273 Crest Drive, Encinitas, California USA 92024.



ENGLISH POLICE UNCOVER A SPY

A VARIANT FOR THOSE WHO REALLY LIKE TO NEGOTIATE:

SUCCEDANEUM!

MARK BERCH

The vast majority of variants alter the tactical environment of the game. The board is altered, additional pieces are introduced, or what the pieces can do is changed. A very few try to change the diplomatic environment, e.g. the various "blind" and "anonymous" games. These usually reduce the amount of meaningful negotiations which can be done. What is needed is something which will expand the possibilities for diplomacy, while leaving the rest of the game's rules relatively undisturbed:

SUCCEDANEUM!

1. The 1971 Rulebook applies except as follows:

2. In addition to primary orders for one's own units, each player with S.C.'s may also submit 1) One set of secondary orders for another country's units and 2) A preference list, from most trusted country to least trusted.

3. If and only if no secondary orders are submitted for a given country, then that country's primary orders are used. If several sets are submitted, the one coming from the person highest on that country's preference list is used.

4. Joke orders, impossible orders, and unordered units will all be listed as the unit holding. In general, the GM will keep secret any facts about the identity of those who have submitted the orders used, censoring press if necessary. Notwithstanding the above, a standby may be called in case a player fails to submit any orders.

5. When the game is down to two players, the provision for secondary orders vanish.

A few comments are in order. As a practical matter, once a preference list is filed, it need not be repeated -- only updated if a change occurs. Note that if secondary orders are submitted only for some of the units, all primary orders are still voided; the remaining units are just listed as holding. Similarly, if W02 and S03 are called for (seasons combined), and the escondary orders to be used for a given country have only W02, then the units hold in S03. Rule 4 is there to give the players the maximum freedom to misrepresent who did what, without in any way involving the GM. Note that the proxy feature applies only to the orders, not to any draw or concession votes.

What does this variant have to offer? For the GM, since the rules are fairly simple, it won't take much additional time to GM, and shouldn't cause additional errors (a marked contrast to many variants). It is not that essential (though it is desirable) to replace dropouts, since those units can fight on. This is nice, because standbys are sometimes difficult to find for variant games. Also, the GM may amuse himself by reading the unused orders.

For the non-playing spectator, this is easy to follow, as it requires no special map, and has rules that, once learned, are easily remembered. As the game should be relatively unpredictable, it will be great fun to watch.

For the player, it provides for greatly enhanced negotiational range. Reasons?!

1. There is more to discuss. In addition to the usual primary orders, one must discuss who the secondary orders should be written for, and what they should .

2. Unless you have no enemies, an order to get something done, you will probably have to persuade someone to do it for you.

3. It is critical that you know just who your real friends are. That preference list is going to select which set to use if more than one are submitted, and the wrong choice could be catastrophic.

4. Far away countries cannot be ignored. Indeed, one of the frustrations of standard diplomacy is that events on the other side of the board are sometimes important, but difficult to affect. England may need an A-I war, but will find it hard to promote. Here though, you can do it with some well-timed secondary orders. And they have a decent chance of being used since, not being a known enemy, you won't be near the bottom of his list.

5. Minor countries can no longer be ignored, as they still have the power to command many pieces via their secondary powers. As such, these countries can be very useful -- or very dangerous.

The net result of all this is to greatly add to the negotiations needed, and I advise players signing up for this to treat it as two games, for the purposes of planning one's game load.

Note that the secondary orders can be used for two divergent purposes: protection of one's ally or thwarting one's enemy. This is not an easy choice, as either could be useless (unneeded or ineffective, respectively). Many types of deceptions are possible. Having agreed to protect your ally, you might instead harm another, gambling your ally won't need it, and won't even realize your perfidy. Or you might deliberately flaw your primary orders, hoping to misrepresent them as someone else's secondary orders if they are used. Winters are especially important, as failure to build will cripple you for at least 2 more seasons. I'm sure that you can think of other angles. Finally, its easily adaptable for FTF play, especially if you are looking for a "wilder" game. Rule 4 will be lost, though, unless you have a GM available.

Note also that if there are fewer than the full seven players, one can still have a "full board" game, since the odds are that the unassigned country will have someone writing proxy orders for it, a coin flip being used to determine priority.

I will be acting, at least temporarily, as a clearinghouse for those who would like to try this game. I am particularly interested in organizing a "demo" game of this variant. Players participating would have to keep some minimum amount of commentary. The GM would have to keep records as to which country wrote the orders used (not a lot of work). At game's end, these materials would be turned over to the commentator. The game, and its commentary, would thus be reprinted, possibly in DW. If you are interested as a player, GM, or commentator, write me (Mark Berch, 492 Naylor Place, Alexandria, Virginia 22304).

Important

ALL SUBSCRIBERS PLEASE NOTE:

The number on your address label is the issue your subscription expires. Those that have an asterik indicates the old rate and you have been credited with three issues. If you wish to renew, the forth issue will be sent for \$1.00.

BACK ISSUES

Yes, you can still receive back issues of DIPLOMACY WORLD, but supplies of some of them are running out. Issues 3, 4, 10 & 14-19 are available from Walter Buchanan, 3025 W. 250 North, Lebanon, IN 46052. Cost for these are \$1.25 each.

Issues 21-26 may be obtained from Jerry Jones, 1854 Wagner Street, Pasadena, CA 91107. Issues 21-23 cost \$1.25 and issues 24-26 cost \$1.50 each.

The 1978-1979 Variant Awards

OUTSTANDING PUBLICATION FOR VARIANTS

Lewis Pulsipher for Diplomacy Games and Variants

OUTSTANDING VARIANT GAMESMASTER

Gregory Costikyan in Urf Durfal

OUTSTANDING VARIANT DESIGN

Steve McLendon for Holocaust

OUTSTANDING ARTICLE ON VARIANTS

- no award -

GENERAL CONTRIBUTION TO VARIANTS

Fred Davis, Jr. for designing variants

SPECIAL AWARD

- no award -



ROBERT E. SACKS, Secretary
for the Variant Awards Panel (1978-79)
of the Diplomacy Variant Commission

Gregory Costikyan
Raymond Heuer
Fred Hyatt
Robert Oliver
Robert Sacks
Rod Walker

It is nice to see that DIPLOMACY WORLD is well represented in these awards. Lewis Pulsipher is the Rules Editor for variants printed in DW and Fred Davis is a fairly regular contributor with his largest effort to date in this issue. I am extremely pleased with the selection of Steve McLendon's variant, "Holocaust." It was the first variant that I published when I took the reigns as DW's editor.

If you would like to have a say in the awards for 1980 then all you need do is to copy the ballot on the next page and nominate your choice for these awards.

VARIANT AWARDS

Nomination Ballot...

The DVC's Variant Awards Panel for 1980 is required to publicly solicit nominations in all categories of award. In addition, the Panel is authorized to fill vacancies in its own membership whenever it has less than 7 members.

Nominations will be considered at any time prior to a decision in the particular category, so it is recommended that nominations be filed as early as possible. Documentation for nominations is not required, but would be helpful.

Please address all correspondence on the Variant Awards to

Robert E. Sacks
Secretary, Variants Awards Panel
4861 Broadway 5-V
NYC, NY 10034

OUTSTANDING PUBLICATION (exclusively or in major parts) FOR VARIANTS

1 -
2 -

OUTSTANDING VARIANT GAMESMASTER

1 -
2 -

OUTSTANDING VARIANT DESIGN

1 -
2 -

OUTSTANDING ARTICLE ON VARIANTS

1 -
2 -

GENERAL CONTRIBUTION TO VARIANTS (may be for events prior to 1980)

1 -
2 -

SPECIAL AWARD (may be for events prior to 1980)

1 (only) -

signature

() I wish to be appointed to fill any vacant seat on the Variant Awards Panel

2001:

A Diplomatic Odyssey

JERRY JONES

It is the year 2001. All things have changed and all things have remained the same. President Reagan has come and gone but he was able to release the hostages in his own way. An enterprising Steve McLendon quit his job with NASA, folded his zine, and began selling jars filled with dirt from Iran which can be used as night lights.

The first woman President, Chastity Bono-Allman-Rogers-Fonda, has decreed that all items dealing in any manner with guns or warfare be banned. This included wargames which, unfortunately, included the game of Diplomacy. Avalon Hill survived the crisis by purchasing the rights from Milton Bradley for the games, "Chutes and Ladders" and "Piggly-Wiggly".

Diplomacy became the "in" thing in back rooms on the college campus'. In a matter of time Diplomacy had become a large underground game and it wasn't too long before the establishment considered the game to be a cancer, consuming the minds and moral fiber of America's youth.

A massive crack down by the police began and arrests for possession of small, painted, wooden blocks were all too frequent. Police, along with Federal agents, seized 1000 pounds of dipzines when they raided Walter Buchanan's home in Indiana. Estimated street value of the zines was said to be in the millions of dollars.

Other homes were hit by such raids. Rod Walker was caught and arrested trying to smuggle 25 copies of the newly re-started "Claw & Fang", into Mexico. Conrad von Metzke was publishing again but was left alone by the authorities since they knew he would fold on his own. Lee Kendter was arrested and charged with "running a numbers racket". Mark Berch's home was under constant surveil-

lance and his phone was tapped but nothing could be found. For in actuality, Mark had taken his entire collection of Diplomacy items and had formed a commune in Southern Utah. He did appear from time to time in the underground Dipzines.

In 1998, Mark formed the SDS (Students for a Diplomatic Society) and was forced to flee to Canada during riots in Baltimore at DipCon XXXI.

When it was announced that the entire stock of Diplomacy games had been seized by the Federal Government and stored in a depository in Albany, NY a small band of "freedom fighters" was formed to liberate the Diplomacy Contraband. Led by BRUX Linsey, this troop of men tried unsuccessfully to over take the depository. Authorities stated that the subversives seemed confused in their attempts and that they found a 48 page manual titled, "VoD Houserules for Liberation of Diplomacy Materials Stored in Warehouse in Albany, NY", near the warehouse.

It wasn't until 1999 that the depository was overtaken by John Michalski and his "just a-minutemen". John had been criticised by the Diplomacy community for his advocacy and use of force in the fight for Diplomatic Rights. John's fleet of 25 reconditioned B-52's proved to be too much for the guards around the warehouse. His attack was not totally successful, for after the attack the largest piece to be found was half of an Italian fleet.

Hollywood became a hotbed for Diplomacy freaks who called themselves, "Dippies". On any given night you could find groups of Dippies roaming the streets dressed as Tsars, Sultans and Army Officers. Diplomacy paraphernalia shops were springing up all over the country but nowhere were they as predom-

inate as they were in Hollywood. It was possible for anyone to purchase unpainted blocks of wood, manuals on "Do-It-Yourself" Diplomacy maps, posters of Allan Calhoun, etc. The stores were not the only one's capitalizing on the Diplomacy craze. Music was inundated with Diplomatic overtones. Record sales were booming and 'Stab Rock' was all the rage. "We Keep Getting Richer, But We Can't Get Our Picture on the Cover of Diplomacy World" was number one on the charts for five months and netted Konrad Beameister a cool 1.5 million.

Not to be outdone, the movie industry was turning out Diplomacy related movies left and right. The most popular of these was the story of an underground postal Diplomacy player entitled, "Easy Writer".

Soon the American public was tired of the fighting and the never ending Diplomacy Piece marches. The State of California passed a law allowing citizens of the State of California to make their own boards and own the blocks for one great power. It was considered a landmark piece of legislation for the legalization of Diplomacy.

Not to long after this legislation was passed, President Chastity 3-A-R-F was impeached when it was discovered that she secretly taped an 18 minute phone conversation with Cliff Mann* in which she spoke of the break-in of the Diplomacy World headquarters. She was replaced by Steve McLendon who had become a multimillionaire and was investing in mineo machines. In an attempt to keep everyone happy (not to mention the sales of mineo machines) President McLendon signed into law the Postal Diplomacy Act. It was now legal to play Diplomacy by mail only. This kept everyone happy; the Dippies could now play legally, the anti-dippies were happy because they knew that with the current Postal Service the average postal game would take 27 years to complete, the Postal Service was happy since the rates for one ounce of second class mail is \$43.52 (First class mail was discontinued in 1989 when it was discovered that there was no such thing), and the President was happy because the price of his mineo stocks were skyrocketing.

(* Cliff Mann published the Dipzine "Watergate" in the late 70's.)

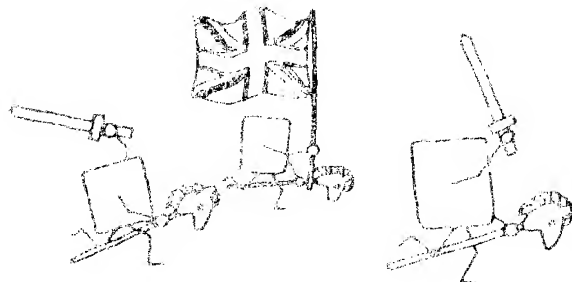
(Continued from page 6)

current games to completion. It took two years, but he completed what he started. And so, on 8 November 1980, after 14 years ADAG came to an end. In his last issue Hal summed up what ADAG was all about. He wrote:

"I have never tried to pretend that ADAG was more than a warehouse zine. I never had the inclination or ambition to try all the other BS that many zines get mixed in. All I was interested in was Diplomacy; for that I offer no apologies. Many players and magazines have come and gone, so ADAG won't be missed except by the players who like a game-zine instead of a magazine. So with all of that I will say, enough for today."

We will miss you, Hal.

((Yes, we will miss Hal Naus. I know that I will. One of the very first games that I ever played was in ADAG. ADAG's biggest plus in my book was that it was one of very few zines, then and now, which placed more importance on the game than articles. Something the hobby could use more of. Some may have called ADAG warehousey, I called it fun. JHO))



CAVALRY CHARGE AT YPRES

*Convoys & the Rulebook

MARK LARZELERE

About a year ago, I was considering writing a computer program to adjudicate Diplomacy. The first thing I set out to do was to see if there were any board situations not covered by the Rulebook. It turns out that there are several, most if not all of which were discovered by others previously (notably Eric Verheiden). However, I've nowhere seen a rundown of all these situations in one article, and I feel such an article would be useful to others setting out to write programs, as well as to people just curious about the subject. I also intend to show here that people aware of these types of situations can, on rare occasions, take advantage of Rulebook technicalities to get an edge in their games.

The first situation is the question of whether or not a country may convoy a foreign army in to dislodge, or cut support given by, another unit of the same country as the fleet. The following example was offered in a poll in VOICE OF DOOM #26:

ENGLAND: A Bel-Hol, F Nth C GERMAN A Den-Bel.
GERMANY: A Den-Bel, A Ruh S A Den-Bel.
FRANCE: A Hol H.

Does the German move to Bel succeed? The vote was 13-6 in favor, showing a definite difference of opinion. A related question would be to change two of the orders: A Bel S GERMAN A Ruh-Hol, A Ruh-Hol. I feel that if you rule that A Bel-

Hol succeeds in the first situation, you must also rule that A Ruh-Hol fails in the second. The question appears to hinge on the wording of Rule IX.3 (Self-Dislodgement Prohibited), and Mr. Calhamer's opinion would be quite welcome. The wording of this rule could easily be clarified (and should be).

The second situation is what I call the "Self-Defeating Convoy." It is unadjudicable. Example #2:

ENGLAND: A Lon-Bel, F Eng C A Lon-Bel.
GERMANY: F Bre-Eng, F Mid S F Bre-Eng.
FRANCE: F Bel S ENGLISH F Eng.

If the convoy goes, then the support of F Bel is cut according to Rule X (Cutting Support). However, F Eng would then have inadequate support and the convoy would fail according to Rule XII.3 (Disrupting a Convoy) --- a paradox.

The third situation is taken from the example after Rule XII.5 (A Convoyed Attack Does Not Protect the Convoying Fleets).

FRANCE: A Spa-Nap, F Lyo C A Spa-Nap,
F Tyn C A Spa-Nap//dislodged//.
ITALY: F Ion-Tyn, F Nap S F Ion-Tyn.

The Rulebook adjudicates this fine. But add French F Rom S F Tyn and A Apu S A Spa-Nap. Then the convoy would succeed, annihilating F Nap. However, there is a paradox as to whether the support of F Nap to the move F Ion-Tyn is cut.

According to Rule X, a dislodged unit's support is cut, and according to Rule XII.5, a convoyed army cannot cut a support given against one of its convoying fleets.

For that example, the paradox makes no difference in the adjudication. But it is possible to construct an example where it does make a difference, which I call the "Beleaguered Convoy." Example #3:

ENGLAND: A Lon-Bel, F Wal-Eng, F Irs S
F Wal-Eng.
GERMANY: F Eng C ENGLISH A Lon-Bel.
FRANCE: F Bre-Eng, F Bel S F Bre-Eng.

Without the convoy, F Eng would stay in place under Rule IX.5 (Beleaguered Garrison). With it, a paradox appears to exist. According to Rule XII.5, the convoy would not cut F Bel's support because the support was against the convoying fleet -- but then the convoy would succeed and dislodge F Bel, cutting its support under Rule X. Then you have a situation similar to the "Self-defeating Convoy." However, in an article titled "The Alternate Convoy Route" in DW#, Eric Verheiden quotes Allan B. Calhaver as saying that Rule XII.5 prevails, providing an "exception" to the Rule X and a successful convoy.

The fourth situation is Pandin's Paradox and it too is unadjudicable.

FRANCE: A Pic-Lon, F Eng C A Pic-Lon,
F Nwg-Nth, F Nwy S F Nwg-Nth,
F Bel S F Eng.
GERMANY: A Yor-Bel, F Nth C A Yor-Bel,
F Wal-Eng, F Irs S F Wal-Eng,
F Lon S F Nth.

Since F Eng is supported by F Bel, it isn't dislodged by F Wal, so A Pic-Lon cuts the support F Lon was providing to F Nth, allowing F Nwg to dislodge F Nth, disrupting the A Yor-Bel convoy. But if you start the adjudication all over again, since F Nth is supported by F Lon, it is not dislodged by F Nwg, so A Yor-Bel cuts the support F Bel was providing to F Eng, allowing F Wal to dislodge F Eng, disrupting the A Pic-Lon convoy.

The fifth is subtly different from Pandin's Paradox. It is based on having one ruling where two convoying fleets are dislodged, and another where neither is

dislodged (as opposed to Pandin's where one ruling would have one fleet dislodged and another would have a different fleet dislodged).

ENGLAND: F Wal-Eng, F Bel S F Wal-Eng,
F Edi-Nth, F Lon S F Edi-Nth.
FRANCE: A Bre-Lon, F Eng C A Bre-Lon.
RUSSIA: A Nwy-Bel, F Nth C A Nwy-Bel.

It is also possible to construct examples of these types involving cycles of up to at least 4 convoying fleets, such as:

ENGLAND: F Edi S F Yor-Nth, F Lon S F Pic-Eng, F Wal S F Lvp-Irs, F Cly S F Bar-Nwg.
GERMANY: F Nwg C A Nwy-Edi, F Nth C A Den-Lon, F Eng C A Bre-Wal, F MAO + F Irs + F NAO C A Gas-Cly.

Who knows how many more examples of these types (or even mixtures of these types) may exist?

The sixth situation is the well-known "Unwanted Convoy." For example:

FRANCE: A Pic-Bel, A Bur S A Pic-Bel,
F Bre-Eng, F MAO S F Bre-Eng.
ENGLAND: F Eng C FRENCH A Pic-Bel.

You can rule that A Pic-Bel succeeds under Rule VII.1 (Movement) or that it fails under Rule XII.4 (Ambiguous Convoy Routes). If it fails, F Eng can retreat to Hol.

But there are other cases, which are no problem to adjudicate, where a convoy not needed or wanted can foil an attack of greater force by another power:

ENGLAND: F Irs S F Wal-Eng, F Wal-Eng,
A Lon-Bel, F Nth C A Lon-Bel,
A Hol S A Lon-Bel.
FRANCE: F Eng C ENGLISH A Lon-Bel.

Because F Eng is dislodged, the convoy fails, even though England's intentions are clear and his force superior. Since the Rulebook allows you to defeat an attack by making an order to assist it, players aware of this technicality may be able to take advantage of it on rare occasions.

By using an unwanted convoy, a player can create a "self-defeating" convoy situation. For example:

ENGLAND: F Wal-Eng, F Irs S F Wal-Eng,
A Lon-Bel, F Nth C A Lon-Bel,
A Hol S A Lon-Bel.
GERMANY: F Eng C ENGLISH A Lon-Bel, F Bel
S F Eng.

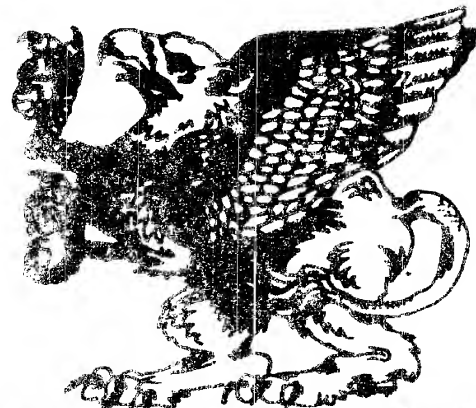
And by an unwanted convoy, a player can create a "beleaguered convoy." Add the English orders F Nth C A Lon-Bel and A Hol S A Lon-Bel to example #3 and imagine again that he has no need for F Eng. By creating unadjudicable situations, most GMs would rule that all units hold, allowing an outnumbered force to defend itself.

The "unwanted convoy" situations could be cleared up by adopting the rule change Eric Verheiden proposed in the previously mentioned article. That is, "Why not simply state that if, after all dislodgments have been taken into account, a continuous route of convoying fleets exists from an army's point of departure to its destination, the convoy proceeds, barring of course prohibition by some other rule?" (This would have the effect of changing the word "any" to "all" in Rule XII.4). Verheiden gives many reasons in that article about why this is more logical than the current rule.

The other situations (aside from #1) could be cleared up by adopting the change to Rule XII.5 that Mr. Verheiden suggested in an article titled "Rewriting the Convoy Order" in DW#14:

"A CONVOYED ATTACK MAY NOT AFFECT THE CONVOYING FLEETS. If a convoyed army's attack would affect the outcome of an attack on any of its convoying fleets, however directly or indirectly, then the convoyed attack may not take place and the army to be convoyed must hold in its original position."

If you go back through all the examples with these changes in mind, I think most of you will consider them superior to the rules as they stand. Hopefully, there are no other types of convoy problems.



GRYPHON

THE FORUM OF FANTASY &
SCIENCE FICTION GAMING

Are you aware of the many new Science Fiction and Fantasy Game titles now on the market? Do you have trouble keeping up with all these new Fantasy or Science Fiction Games? Have you recently purchased a new game and were disappointed in it, wishing that you could have had a better idea of how it played before you spent your hard-earned money? Wouldn't it have been great if there was a magazine like *GRYPHON* which provided reviews of Science Fiction and Fantasy Games, providing more information and guiding you in finding the game you really want to buy? While we're imagining, wouldn't it be great if that magazine also provided intelligent articles on how to better play Science Fiction and Fantasy Role Playing and Board Games?

Well, that magazine is coming! Titled *GRYPHON*, this new Science Fiction and Fantasy magazine will be brought to you by the same company which produces *FIRE & MOVEMENT*, the award-winning "consumer's guide" of Board Gaming.

If your hobby includes Science Fiction and Fantasy Gaming, this is one magazine you won't want to miss. *GRYPHON* will be released in the summer of 1980, and you can now reserve a sample copy, or place a trial subscription for *GRYPHON*. In the United States, sample copies are \$2.50 each, and a four-issue trial subscription is \$9.00. Available from:

BARON PUBLISHING COMPANY
P.O. Box 8107
La Puente, California
91747

Recent

Postal

Winners

TAKEN FROM EVERYTHING #46

The latest issue of EVERYTHING, published by Lee Kendter Sr. (4347 Benner Street, Philadelphia, PA 19135), had the final listings for 36 postal games. The breakdown of wins & draws went like this:

Wins	- 18 games
2-way Draw	- 8 games
3-way Draw	- 4 games
4-way Draw	- 3 games
5-way Draw	- 3 games
6-way Draw	- 0 games
7-way Draw	- 0 games

Wins per Power:
Austria - 2 wins
England - 1 win
France - 2 wins
Germany - 3 wins
Italy - 1 win
Russia - 6 wins
Turkey - 3 wins

There are a few things which require special notice. The first being the outstanding play of Don Ditter, who won three of the 36 games reported. He won two as Germany and one as Russia. Not too shabby!

The "I-Don't-Just-Want-To-Win-I-Want-Total-Domination" Award goes to Randolph Smyth who won the game 1976JG as England. Randolph picked up NINE supply centers in 1910 to win the game with 25 sc's. To show some of his dominance, during that turn Turkey lost 2 centers, Austria lost 2 and Germany lost 5.

It's not that rare for a game started in 1976 to be just ending but 1976CU caught my eye. The game lasted for four years in real time and only 5 years in Diplomacy time. That is a lot of sticktoitiveness! Not only was it the shortest game listed but it had a sole winner with 18 centers. Andy Lischett took his Russian troops to this 18 center win.

That was the shortest game, how about the longest? It too began in 1976 and its number is 1976IF. The game lasted 20 game years in Bob Sergeant's ST. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON. Doug Beyerlein (Italy) and Mark Berch (Germany) ended this game in a 17-17 draw.

Now for the Winners as taken from EVERYTHING #46

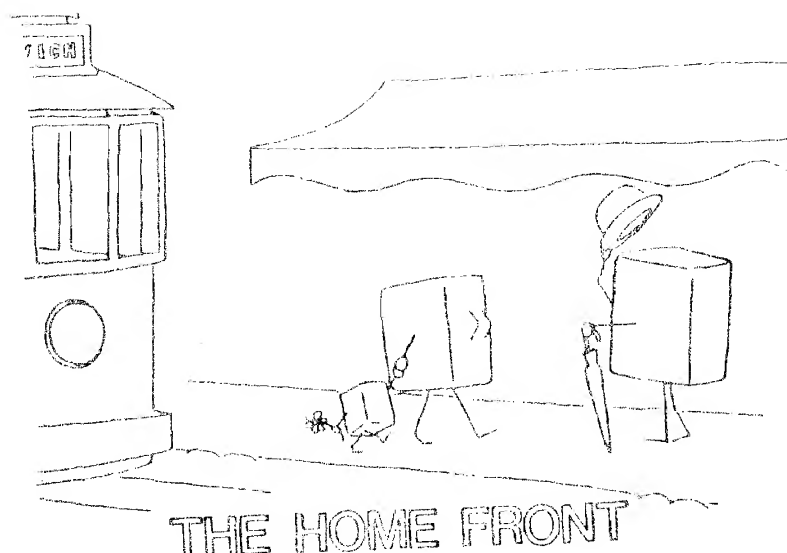
Player	Number	Country	Zine
Don Ditter	1975B	Germany	Urf Durfal
Paul Novak	1975AY	Turkey	The Maximaxu Gazette
Eric Verheiden*	1975HW	Austria	Graustark
Don Ditter	1976BC	Germany	St. Geo and the Dragon
Rick Kassel*	1976BK	Germany	Ruritania
Andy Lischett	1976CU	Russia	Zeppelin
Dan Mathias*	1976DD	Germany	Command
Robert Acheson	1976DZ	Austria	Envoy
Daniel Plater	1976EU	Turkey	The Mixumaxu Gazette
Randolph Smyth	1976JG	England	Ter-ran
Eric Verheiden*	1977AO	Russia	EPGIA-T
Don Ditter	1977CG	Russia	St. Geo and the Dragon
Mark Taylor	1977HR	Russia	The Mixumaxu Gazette
Michael McMillie	1978AR	Turkey	Graustark
H.D. Bassett	1978AZ	France	Claw & Fang
David Pierce	1978FG	Russia	Ruritania
Norm Schwartz*	1978IO	France	The Dogs of War
Bill Hart	1979C	Russia	Why Me?

(* indicates took over position after game had started.)

~~~~~

You've heard me speak of Andy Lischett's zine CHEESECAKE and of the artwork it contains. Well if one picture is worth a thousand words then I've given Andy 4,000 words of praise because the four cartoons included in this issue come from the latest issue of CHEESECAKE that's titled "Allan Calhamers World War I Coloring Book".

DW is always looking for talented artists with contributions for DW. Make your mark on the world and draw for DIPLOMACY WORLD.



# Longevity

JERRY H. JONES

I suppose one of the things that distresses me the most about the hobby that we are currently in is the quick turnover of hobby members. I wish that I could come up with a miracle and change that but I do not think that it is in the cards.

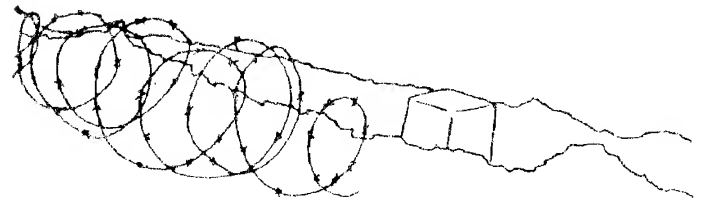
I have been, and currently are, in other PBM hobbies and the quick turnover does not seem to be the way of life that it is in the Diplomacy hobby. Maybe it is just the nature of the game that people don't stay around as long as they do in other organizations. And it is really too bad. I have made a lot of really good friends in this hobby, most of which are no longer still involved. Some gave their last hurrahs, others just faded out of view without a word of goodbye.

So what is it about postal Diplomacy that causes a quick turnover? The first thought that comes to mind is that you can play the same game for only so long. But I discount that reason since I know of many games that are played by the same persons for decades without losing interest.

I feel, though, that in part it is the game. Diplomacy is a demanding game to play. Many players will attack an ally if they do not receive a letter between seasons. One must keep on his or her toes and maintain a constant line of communication with most of the players in his or her game in order to be competitive. If you want to stay in the hobby I would suggest that you set aside a time each week to catch up on your letter writing. And don't over-extend yourself in the number of games that you are in so as to make this time of enjoyment a drudgery.

The number of games you are playing is very important. Some people can play 20+ games at one time and never feel the pressure while others feel "cramped" with 3 or 4 games. I may be in the minority but I don't feel that it is important that you play in only one game at a time. It can be very boring and you can lose interest waiting for that lone game. I would suggest as a newcomer that you start off with one game and in a month or so begin another. I can hear some of the other members of the hobby gasping over what I just suggested, but that's the way I feel. Find the level of game(s) that is you. Don't surpass that level and don't drop below it. Make Diplomacy fun and not a chore. If you don't feel like writing, don't write. If you feel like writing a small note, do so. And if you feel like writing a novel, don't expect me to read it all. It is your game and you are the one to set your particular level of enjoyment.

I would love to say that four years from today we will all still be together playing Diplomacy, but that is just a pipe dream. My only hope is that you will look for the pace that fits you and that maybe three years from now we will still be together



EUROPE 1916

## Qué Pasa?

Since last issue I have had the pleasure of browsing through some new and interesting zines. One of them is Marion Bates' *PLAGUE TIMES*. I have only seen the first two issues of PT and so far I'm impressed. Published once a month at a sub rate of \$6 per year. As of issue #2 Marion still had openings in *DIPLOMACY*. You can reach Marion at PO Box 381, Kalkaska, MI 46946.

So you think you've seen it all, well until you see *PEEK*, you haven't. *PEEK* is probably the first step in the direction of *DippyPom*. Penned by a Jane Proskin, *PEEK* is a novel idea whose time I'm not sure has come, but it's here anyway. Jane talks of her exploits with various hobby members. For a peek at *PEEK* send some stamps to "Occupant", PO Box 6824, Burbank, CA 91510.

January 1, 1981 was the date of the first issue of *THE WHITE DUKE* published by Steve Shaddix. *TWD* has a little of everything from "Afrika Korps" to *DIPLOMACY*. Published on a monthly schedule at 50¢ an issue, *TWD* offers Diplomacy games for \$2. You can see it for yourself by sending postage to Steve Shaddix, 5486 Butano Way, Rocklin, CA 95677.

Earlier in this issue you read about the last issue of *ADAG*. Today I read the last issue of another zine by a member of the hobby who had become an institution, Konrad Baumeister. Konrad has folded out his zine *EGGNOG* as of January 25, 1981. Inside Konrad explains that he has been looking and has found homes for the games he had started. I offer the best of luck to Konrad and I hope to hear from him again

in one vein or another.

I never seem to say much about zines from across the ocean so allow me to correct that now. There is one zine I receive regularly and that is *CHANTECLER*. C is published by Francis Bido, Square Allende 12, 4200 Ougree, Belgique. I'd like to say a lot about *CHANTECLER* but all that I can say is that the print is superb and the zine is very regular. I'd say more but the entire zine is in French and once you get past *parlee vous* I'm dead. If you can read French, this would be a valuable addition to your collection.

Are you searching for a complete listing of *DipZines*? If you are, Michael Mills (1585 Quaker Rd., Macedon, NY 14502) is just the fellow you should be talking to. Michael has a list of zines with a brief description of each for the small sum of 50¢. A very handy guide for those of you looking for a new zine to play in.

Has a zine up and left taking your game with it? Well if it has then maybe you should be getting in touch with John Daly (Rt. 2, Box 136-MS, Rockwell, NC 28138). John is one of three who are attempting to relocate games that have been orphaned. Send John all of the particulars you have for the game and with a little bit of luck you can get back to the business at hand.

Sometimes I forget to thank some of the people who send that extra bit of time and effort to help the hobby and *DIPLOMACY WORLD*. One of those people I will thank now so as not to have another issue go by without saying so. Robert Sacks has gone above and beyond the call of duty in his work in the 'Need-A-Game' column. If you want your game listed monthly with Robert and have it listed on the DW 'Need-A-Game' column, all you need to do is to address a letter to Robert Sacks, 4861 Broadway V-5, NYC, NY 10034 and inform him of your game openings. If you are looking for a current listing, I'm sure if you sent Robert a SASE he would be more than happy to pass along the most recent listing. THANX Robert, you're doing a great service and are a tremendous help to me.

Glenn Overby is putting together the 1981 Postal Diplomacy Census. I am asking all publishers to transfer a list of their subscribers to Glenn so as to make this as clear and as complete a census as possible. Maybe this census will get along better than the ill-fated 1979 census. (23096 Tawas, Hazel Park, MI 48030).

Looking for a FTF game in the Sacramento area? Maybe then you should get in touch with Clark Reynolds (6731 37th Ave. Sacramento, CA 95824). Clark has sent me quite a few announcements for tournaments to be held in his area but they never seem to come at the right time to be included in DW. The latest tournament will be February 14th & 15th which has already passed. (I love the title of this tourney - "St. Valentine's Day Massacre".) So don't wait for me to announce it, contact Clark directly.

What's this, another zine goes by the wayside! After 6 years Tony Watson is closing out RURITANIA. Tony's a super nice guy and I'll hate to see him leave but I'm sure he'll keep in touch. He's a personal friend of the family and we've invited him down a couple of times to spend the night. (The only thing wrong was that he accepted.)

Andy Lischett strikes again with another outstanding issue of CHEESECAKE. I can say without thinking (which is something I do quite often) that CHEESECAKE is one, if not the most enjoyable zine on the market today. His latest issue had the "Alan Calhoun World War I Coloring Book" complete with crayons. If there is room in this issue I am hoping to include some of his cartoons, if not ask Andy for a copy. (3021 N. Davlin Ct., Chicago, IL 60618)

I had planned on using this space to mention John Michalski's BRUTUS BULLETIN which is a zine I enjoy receiving because of its timely letter section. Well I was going to plug John's zine but it's been over two months since I've seen my name

inside BB so I refuse to even mention his address. Better yet, I'll give you his address and when he is swamped with requests it will shame him into mentioning my name. (Rt. 10, Box 526-Q, Moore, Oklahoma, 73165)

In the 5th Annual Game Awards voting by the readers of GAMES & PUZZLES has named DIPLOMACY as the number two game for the second year in a row. The leader for both years was KINGMAKER. Now I may be mistaken, but I believe that DIPLOMACY was No. 1 three years ago. For those of you who have never heard of GAMES & PUZZLES should know that it is a professional games magazine published in Britain.

If you enjoyed the article about convoys by Mark Larzelere then you should be subscribing to APPALLING GREED. I believe that Mark has a set limit to the number of subscribers he wants so if you like his style of writing then I would wait no longer to ask him for a sample. (522 W. Grand River, Howell, MI 48843)

HOBBY MASCOT?!?! Just to show what kind of things come out of Texas I am going to pass along R. Michael Conner's call for nominations for the official Diplomacy Hobby Mascot for 1981. I would have nominated Tony Watson but now he's getting out of the hobby. What the heck, get off your duffs and nominate someone, somebody, something? (3214 Beverly Rd., Austin, TX 78703)

There is not enough room in each issue of DW to do justice to the backbone of the Diplomacy future...the novices. So it is a pleasure to announce the availability of SUPERNOVA, the Novice Packet of postal Diplomacy. Bruce Linsey has collected together a fine package of articles written by Randolph Smyth, Bob Sergeant, Mark Berch, Eric Verheiden, Rod Walker, Fred Davis, Jr., Steve McLendon, Edi Birsan, Bruce and many others. The package covers everything that you would need to know about the postal hobby. A must for novices. Cost is 75¢. (Bruce Linsey, Bldg 11, Apt 21, Leisureville, Watervliet, NY 12189)

# NEED-A-GAME

|                 |                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PLAGUE TIMES    | Marion Bates, PO Box 381, Kalkaska, MI 46946<br>\$3 + 12/\$6<br>DIPLOMACY, KINGMAKER, MACHIAVELLI, THIRD REICH                                         |
| GRAUSTARK       | John Boardman, 234 East 19th St., Brooklyn, NY 11226<br>\$15<br>DIPLOMACY                                                                              |
| WHITESTONIA     | John Caruso, 42-34 Saull St., Flushing, NY 11355<br>\$2 + \$4/10<br>DIPLOMACY, Nuclear Holocaust                                                       |
| BUSHWACKER      | Fred C. Davis Jr., 1427 Clairidge Rd., Baltimore, MD 21207<br>\$7 (\$3.50 standby)<br>1885 II                                                          |
| LIFE OF MONTY   | Don Del Grande, 2400 Durant Ave 208, Berkeley, CA 94720<br>55¢/issue<br>DIPLOMACY, EMPIRES OF THE MIDDLE AGES, KINGMAKER, Pythonic, THIRD REICH        |
| ENVOY           | Roy Henricks, 128 Deerfield Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15235<br>\$2 + \$5<br>AFTER THE HOLOCAUST, Deadman (\$3), DIPLOMACY (\$4), KINGMAKER, Grand Tournament |
| LDNS            | Jerry Jones, 1854 Wagner St., Pasadena, CA 91107<br>\$10<br>DIPLOMACY (no standbys)                                                                    |
| APPALLING GREED | Mark Larzellere, 522 W. Grand River, Howell, MI 48843<br>\$3 + 10/\$3<br>DIPLOMACY                                                                     |
| EMHAIN MACHA    | Michael Mills, 1585 Quaker Rd., Macedon, NY 14502<br>\$2 + \$1 deposit<br>Jimmu, Vain Rats.                                                            |
| JIHAD           | Glenn Overby, 23096 Tawas, Hazel Park, MI 48030<br>\$4 + 12/\$6<br>KINGMAKER, DIPLOMACY, MACHIAVELLI, North America 2020                               |
| HANSARD         | Robert Sacks, 4861 Broadway 5-V, NYC, NY 10034<br>\$3<br>Parlement (w/rules amendment rule)                                                            |
| TORPEDO         | Bernard Sampson, 123 Sixth St., Middlesex, NJ 08846<br>\$4 + \$2 deposit + \$5/12<br>DIPLOMACY, Victory Point                                          |
| MIKE'S MAG      | Mike Scott, 1726 Cypress Circle, LaVerne, CA 91750<br>\$3<br>CONQUISTADOR, CRUSADES, KINGMAKER, MACHIAVELLI, RUSSIAN CIVIL WAR                         |
| BORN TO DIP     | Brad Wilson, 302 Friendship Dr., Paoli, PA 19301<br>10/\$5<br>DIPLOMACY                                                                                |

# SOURCE OF THE NILE

## Game of African Exploration in the 19th Century

Follow the great 19th-century explorers in their search for the source of the Nile. Discover mountains, jungles, deserts and great lakes in the uncharted heart of the Dark Continent. Meet and deal with native tribes—survive animal attacks, disease, and starvation—overcome superstition, desertion and disaster to add your discoveries to the map of Africa.

**S**ource of The Nile is designed to be an educational and challenging game in which players compete primarily with Nature and with each other. Luck tends to be an element in the game but can be overcome by careful play. Because the game situation is forever changing, there is no single best strategy; however, players must weigh risks against gains with every decision they make and good judgment will pay off.

The game is played on a map-board showing Africa from Khartoum to Capetown and Lagos to Mombasa. The periphery of this map, showing the territory known ca. 1820, is filled-in; the center is blank. A hexagonal grid is superimposed on the map to regulate movement and to delimit territory explored. In the course of play, each player moves a token (representing his explorer) from explored hexagons onto blank hexagons one at a time; terrain, native tribes and other discoveries within the hexagon are then semi-randomly determined, with allowance made for previous discoveries in adjacent hexagons. The player interacts with the discoveries (e.g., negotiates with new natives for guides) and records them on the mapboard using wax crayons. The mapboard surface is erasable; if the explorer dies before returning to Europe to publish his discoveries, all hexagons which only he has explored will be erased and "subsequent explorers will find that his discoveries were only rumors"; i.e., when other players explore the erased hexagons later they will have to generate new discoveries there.

When explorers do return to civilization, however, they may publish their discoveries, after which they

are safe from erasure. Players may also emulate real explorers by withholding some of their discoveries since they will enjoy some advantages when moving through terrain or dealing with natives known only to them. Points are scored for discoveries as they are published and once scored will not be lost if the explorer dies or is retired by his player. A player may retire his explorer at any time and then start a new explorer in Europe. Thus each player may operate several explorers in one game, although no player may operate more than one explorer at a time.

Before each trip to Africa, explorers will have to raise money to support their expedition. New explorers with no discoveries to their credit must do this by drawing chance cards for several turns until they feel their finances are adequate. Experienced explorers can accelerate this process by publishing discoveries, which will allow them to draw additional chance cards.

As there are over 420 blank hexagons to be explored, the game is not usually played to the bitter end at one sitting. Instead a reasonable time-limit is set, at the end of which all explorers retire and the player with the most points is the winner. The complete exploration of Africa—and the final determination of the source of the Nile—can be the result of several games, each starting where the last left off. After all, the adventure is in the search for the source of the Nile, not in the finding of it!



This game box includes an expanded version of the original *Source of the Nile* game, which won several "Best Game of the Year" awards after its initial introduction to the public in 1977.



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